IMPRIMATUR,

Sam. Parker, *Reverendiſſimo in Chriſto Patri ac Domino Domino* Gilberto *Archiep.* Cantuar. *à Sac. Dom.*

Ex Ædibus Lambeth.
Sept. 12. 1672.




Primitive
Christianity.
in 3 parts
Learn of me Math. 11. 29.
London Printed for R: Chiswell at ye Rose & Crown in St Pauls Churchyard

11. 88. f. fig. 31

Primitive Christianity:

OR, THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Antient Christians,

In the First AGES of the

GOSPEL.

In THREE PARTS.

By *WILLIAM CAVE*, D. D.

Οὐκ ἐν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας θεοσεβείας πράγματα. Just. Mart. Paræneſ. ad Græc. *p.* 33.

Nos non habitu Sapientiam, ſed mente præferimus:
Non eloquimur magna, ſed vivimus.
Min. Fæl. Dial. *p.* 31.

The Seventh Edition Corrected.

LONDON: 9 Ac
Printed for DANIEL MIDWINTER at the Three Crowns, and BENJAMIN COWSE at the Roſe and Crown in *St. Paul's Church-yard.* 1714.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

NATHANAEL

Lord Biſhop of OXFORD,

And Clerk of the Cloſet to His Majeſty.

MY LORD,

WHEN I firſt deſigned that theſe Papers ſhould take Sanctuary at your Lordſhip's Patronage, the Hebrew *Proverb* preſently came into my Mind, Keep cloſe to a Great Man, and Men will reverence thee. *I knew no better way (next to the Innocency, and, if it may be, Uſefulneſs of the Subject I have undertaken) to ſecure my ſelf from the Cenſures of Envy, and Ill Nature, than by putting my ſelf under your Protection, whoſe known* εὐφυΐα, *the Sweetneſs and Obligingneſs of whoſe Temper, is able to render Malice it ſelf candid and favourable. Encouraged alſo by this Conſideration, I hardened my ſelf into the Confidence of this Addreſs; which I had not otherwiſe attempted, but that your Lordſhip's Kindneſs and generous Compaſſion, and the*

דבוק לשהוון ישרתוון לך

Bereſch. Rab. ca. 17. ap. Druſ. Adag. Ebraic. Decur. 6. Adag. 1.

mighty Condeſcenſion wherewith you were always pleaſed to treat me, (while I had the Happineſs of your Lordſhip's Neighbourhood) did at once invite and oblige me to it. I ſay no more, leſt I ſhould affront that Modeſty *that is ſo innate to* your *Temper, or come within the leaſt ſuſpicion of* Flattery, *ſo repugnant to my* own.

One thing only there is, which I cannot but remark, the great Honour which your Lordſhip has done, not to the Epiſcopal *only, but to the whole* Miniſterial *Order, that a Perſon of your Rank and Education would ſtoop to an Imployment ſo little valued and regarded in this Unthankful and Degenerate Age. And herein your Lordſhip has been a happy Precedent; your Example being already followed by ſome, and will ſhortly by more Perſons of Noble Deſcent and Pedegree: a thing, for which the* Church of England *was never more renowned ſince the Reformation, than it is at this Day.*

My Lord,

There was a Time within the Compaſs of our Memory, when the Biſhops amongſt other things were accuſed (by one of the Houſe of Peers, though one that had not the moſt reaſon to bring in a Charge of that nature) to be in reſpect of their Parentage, De fæce Populi, *of the very* Dregs and Refuſe of the People: *(Malice will play at ſmall Games rather than not at all.) A Charge as falſe as it was ſpiteful: though, had it been true, it had been impertinent, ſeeing the very* Order *is enough to derive Honour upon the Perſon, even when*

Church-Hiſt. lib. 11. p. 183.

when he cannot (as your Lordſhip) bring it along with him. And indeed, ſo Honourable an Order has Epiſcopacy ever been accounted, even when there have been no viſible Advantages either of Riches or Grandeur to attend it, (as there were not in the more early Ages of Chriſtianity) that Perſons of the greateſt Birth and Fortunes have not thought it below them to exchange the Civil Tribunal *for the* Biſhop's Throne, *and to lay down the Publick* Rods *and* Axes, *to take up the* Croſier, *and the* Pedum Paſtorale. *If we may credit that Catalogue of the Biſhops of* Conſtantinople, *recorded by* Nicephorus, *we find* Dometius *Brother to the Emperor* Probus, *and after him his two Sons,* Probus *and* Metrophanes, *ſucceſſively ſitting in that Chair; as afterwards* Nectarius, *St.* Chryſoſtom's *Predeceſſor, was of a* Senator *made* Biſhop *of that See.* Thalaſſus *became Biſhop of* Cæſarea *when he was a* Senator, *the* Præfectus Prætorio *(or the Emperor's* Lieutenant, *one of the higheſt Places both of* Truſt *and* Honour *in the* Roman *Empire) of* Illyricum, *and riſing to greater Dignities, being deſigned by the Emperor for the Government of the* Eaſt. *St.* Ambroſe *(whoſe Father was an* Illuſtrious Perſon, *the* Prefect *of* France) *was made Governour of* Liguria *and* Æmelia, *and ſent thither with* Conſular *Power and Dignity; during which Imployment he was made Biſhop of* Milan. Petronius *Biſhop of* Bononia *is ſaid to have been firſt a* Præfectus Prætorio, *and to deſcend of the Family of* Conſtantine *the Great.* Sidonius Apol-

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 8. c. 6. p. 541.

Apollinaris, *deſcended for many Generations of Noble and Illuſtrious Parents, his Father the* Præfectus Prætorio *of* Gaul, *himſelf Son-in-law to* Avitus, *(a Perſon of extraordinary Honour and Imployment, and afterwards* Conſul *and* Emperor) *and yet in the midſt of this diſdained not to become Biſhop of* Clermont *in* France. *More ſuch Inſtances I could give, not to ſpeak of Multitudes that were in the middle and latter Ages of the Church, eſpecially, in our own Nation: But I return.*

My Lord,

I beheld Religion generally laid waſte, and Chriſtianity *ready to draw its laſt Breath, ſtifled and oppreſſed with the Vices and Impieties of a debauched and profligate Age: To contribute towards the Recovery whereof, and the reducing things (if poſſible) to the* Antient Standard, *is the Deſign of the Book that is here offered to you. The Subject, I aſſure my ſelf, is not unſuitable either to your Lordſhip's* Order, Temper, *or* Courſe of Life; *if my ill Managery of it has not rendered it unworthy of your Patronage. However, ſuch as it is, it's humbly preſented by him who is*

Your Lordſhip's

Faithfully Devoted Servant,

WILLIAM CAVE.

THE

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

I Know not whether it may be any Satisfaction to the Curiosity of the Reader, to understand the Birth and Original of these *Papers*; if it be, let him take this account. No sooner did I arrive at Years of capable Discerning, but I began to inquire into the Grounds of that Religion into which I had been Baptized: which I soon found to be so Noble and Excellent, in all its *Laws* so Just and Rational, in all its *Designs* so Divine and Heavenly; so Perfective of the *Principles*, so Conducive to the *Happiness* of Human Nature; a Religion so *worthy* of God, so *advantageous* to Man, built upon such firm and uncontroulable Evidence, back'd with such proper and powerful Arguments, that I was presently convinced of the Divinity that resided in it; and concluded with my self (and I thought I had reason so to do) that surely the Disciples of this Religion must needs be the most Excellent Persons in the World. But alas! a few years Experience of the World let me see, that this was the Conclusion of one that had conversed only with Books, and the Reasonings of his own Mind. I had not been long an Observer of the Manners of Men, but I found them generally so Debauched and Vicious, so corrupt and contrary to the Rules of this Holy Religion, that if a modest and

and honeſt *Heathen* was to eſtimate Chriſtianity by the Lives of its Profeſſors, he would certainly proſcribe it as the vileſt Religion in the World. Being offended hereat, I reſolved *to ſtand in the ways and ſee, and enquire for the good old Way, the Paths wherein the Antient Chriſtians walked.* For I could not think that this had always been the unhappy Fate and Portion of *Chriſtianity*; and that if the Footſteps of true Chriſtian Piety and Simplicity were any where to be found, it muſt be in thoſe Times; *When* (as St. *Hierom* notes) *the Blood of Chriſt was yet warm in the Breaſts of Chriſtians, and the Faith and Spirit of Religion more brisk and vigorous.*

Quando Domini noſtri adhuc calebat cruor & fervebat recens in credentibus fides. Hier. ad Demet. p. 68. tom. 1.

In purſuance of this Deſign, I ſet my ſelf to a more cloſe and diligent reading of the firſt Fathers and antient Monuments of the Church than ever I had done before, eſpecially for the *three or four firſt Centuries*; for much lower I did not intend to go, becauſe the Life and Spirit of Chriſtianity did then viſibly decline apace; nothing as I went along whatever contributed to my Satisfaction in this Affair. Had I conſulted my own Eaſe and Quiet, I might have gone a nearer way to work, and have taken up with what I could have picked up of this nature in *Baronius*, the *Centuries*, &c. But I could not ſatisfy my ſelf (and I preſume it would as little have ſatisfied the Reader) with Shreds, with things taken upon truſt, and borrowed at the ſecond hand. For the ſame reaſon I made little uſe of *The Lives of the Saints* (eſpecially in ſuch Inſtances whereof there was the leaſt cauſe to doubt) and the ſpurious and ſuppoſititious Writings of the Fathers; ſeldom making uſe of any, but ſuch as are of unqueſtionable Credit and Authority. And becauſe the Teſtimony of an Enemy is ever accounted of great moment and regard, I have been careful to add the Teſtimonies that have been given to Chriſtians and to their Religion

Religion by the known and profeſſed Adverſaries of the Chriſtian Faith; ſuch as *Pliny*, *Lucian*, *Porphyry*, *Julian*, &c. more whereof we might have been furniſhed with, had thoſe Writings of theirs againſt the Chriſtian Religion been extant, which the Zeal of the firſt Chriſtian Princes induſtriouſly baniſhed out of the World. What other Authors of later Date I have borrowed any light from in this Diſcourſe, I have faithfully produced in the Margin. Two Books indeed I met with, which at firſt ſight I well hoped would have wholly ſaved me the labour of this Search; the one written by a * Perſon of our own Nation, the other by a † *Florentine* of great Name and Note: but my hopes were very much fruſtrated in both. For the firſt, I no ſooner looked into it, but found my ſelf wretchedly impoſed upon by the Title; his *elder Times and Chriſtians* (not to ſay any thing of his Intermixtures of things nothing to his purpoſe) ſeldom reaching any higher than the *middle Ages* of the Church, little or nothing being remarked of the *firſt Ages* of Chriſtianity, the only thing I aimed at. For the other (which I met not with till I had almoſt finiſhed this Search) I found it miſerably thin and empty, containing little elſe but ſhort Gloſſes upon ſome few Paſſages out of *Tertullian*; from whence I did not enrich my ſelf with any one Obſervation, which I had not made before. There is indeed an Epiſtle of *Fronto*'s, the Learned Chancellor of the *Univerſity of Paris*, concerning this Affair; but it contains only ſome general Intimations, and ſeems to have been deſigned by him (as appears from that and ſome other of his Epiſtles) as the Ground-work of a larger and more particular Diſ-

* *A modeſt Diſcourſe of the Piety, Charity, and Policy of elder Times and Chriſtians, &c.* By Edward Waterhouſe, *Eſq*; London, 1655.

† *Paganin. Gaudentius de vita Chriſtianorum ante tempora Conſtantini. Florent.* 1639. *quarto.*

De vita & moribus Chriſtianorum, &c. pag. 1660. *quarto.*

Diſcourſe. But his Death happening ſome few Years after the Date of that Epiſtle, cut off all hopes of proſecuting ſo excellent a Deſign. Theſe are all that I know of, who have attempted any thing on this Subject; none whereof coming up to the Curioſity of my Deſign, I was forced to reſume the Task I had undertaken, and to go on with it through thoſe Antient Writers of the Church: the Reſult of which Search is laid together in this Book.

Whether I have diſcharged my ſelf herein to the Satisfaction of the Reader, I know not; ſure I am, I have endeavoured what I propounded to my ſelf, *viz. A Specimen of Primitive Chriſtianity*, in ſome of the moſt conſiderable Branches and Inſtances of Religion. Here he will find a *Piety* active and zealous, ſhining through the blackeſt Clouds of Malice and Cruelty; afflicted *Innocence* triumphant, notwithſtanding all the powerful or politick Attempts of Men or Devils; a *Patience* unconquerable under the biggeſt Perſecutions; a *Charity* truly *Catholick* and Unlimited; a *Simplicity* and upright Carriage in all Tranſactions; a *Sobriety* and *Temperance* remarkable to the admiration of their Enemies; and in ſhort, he will here ſee the Divine and Holy Precepts of the Chriſtian Religion drawn down into Action, and the moſt excellent *Genius* and Spirit of the Goſpel breathing in the Hearts and Lives of thoſe Good Old Chriſtians. Here he will find a real and evident Confutation of that ſenſleſs and abſurd *Calumny* that was faſtned upon Chriſtianity, as if it required no more than an *eaſy* and *credulous* Temper of Mind; as if under a pretence of Kindneſs and Indulgence to Sinners, it miniſtred to all Vice and Wickedneſs. *Celſus* confidently begins the Charge: * *There be ſome amongſt the*

* Φησὶ δέ τινας μηδὲ βεβλωμένους δεδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν λόγον περὶ ὧν πιστεύουσι, χρῆσθαι τῷ μὴ ἐξετάζειν, ἀλλὰ πιστεύειν. Καὶ, ἡ πίστις σε σώσει σε. Καὶ, κακὸν ἡ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ σοφία, ἀγαθὸν δὲ ἡ μωρία. *Orig. adv. Celſ. l. 1. p. 8. vid. l. 6. p. 282.*

the *Chriſtians* (ſays he) *that will neither give nor receive a Reaſon of their Faith, who are wont to cry out, Don't examine, but believe*; and *thy Faith will ſave thee: The Wiſdom of the World is evil*; *but Fooliſhneſs good and uſeful.* *Julian* carries on the Charge ſomewhat higher, as if the Chriſtian Religion were not only content with a naked and empty Faith, but gave encouragement to Sin, by aſſuring its moſt deſperate *Proſelytes* of an eaſy Pardon. In the concluſion of his *Cæſars*, after he had aſſigned the *Roman* Emperors their particular *Tutelar* Deities, he delivers over *Conſtantine* the Great, the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, to the *Goddeſs of Pleaſure*; who having effeminately tricked and dreſſed him up, brought him to the Goddeſs *Aſotia*, or Intemperance, where he finds τὸν υἱὸν, *his Son*, *Conſtantius* probably, (for the Paſſage is a little diſturbed and obſcure, for which reaſon probably the Tranſlator paſſed it by, and took no notice of it) making this univerſal Proclamation: *Whoever is an Adulterer, or a Murderer, whoever is an impure profligate Wretch, let him come boldly; for I declare, that being waſhed in this Water* [Baptiſm] *he ſhall immediately be cleanſed: Nay, although he again commit thoſe Sins, let him but knock his Breaſt and beat his Head, and I will make him clean.* Much to the ſame purpoſe *Zoſimus* (as good a Friend to Chriſtianity as either of the former) ſpitefully charges it upon *Conſtantine* the Great, that being haunted with the Conſcience of his prodigious Villanies, and having no hopes given by the *Gentile Prieſts* of the Expiation of his Crimes, embraced Chriſtianity; being told, that in the Chriſtian Religion, *There*

"Οσις φθορεὺς, ὅσις μιαφόνος, ὅσις ἐναγὴς καὶ βδελυρὸς, ἴτω θαῤῥῶν, ἀποφανῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν τοῦτῳ τῷ ὕδατι λέσας, αὐτίκα καθαρόν. Κἂν πάλιν ἔνοχος τοῖς αὐτοῖς γίνηται, δώσω τὸ στῆθος πλήξαντι, καὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ κατάξαντι, καθαρῷ γίνεσθαι.

Julian. Cæſares, p. 53.

Πάσης ἁμαρτίας καὶ ἀναιρετικὸν εἶναι τῶν τῇ Χριστιανῶν διαβεβαιώσατο δόξαν καὶ τοῦτο ἔχειν ἐπάγγελμα, τὸ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς μεταλαμβάνοντας αὐτῆς, πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἕξα φάρμακον καθίσασθαι. *Zosim. Hist. lib. 2. p. 534.*

was a Promise of cleansing from all Sin; and that as soon as ever any closed with it, Pardon would be granted to the most profligate Offenders. As if Christianity had been nothing else but a *Receptacle* and *Sanctuary* for *Rogues* and *Villains*, where the worst of Men might be wicked under hopes of Pardon. But how false and groundless (especially as urged and intended by them) this impious Charge was, appears from the whole Design and Tenour of the Gospel, and that more than ordinary Vein of Piety and Strictness that was conspicuous in the Lives of its first Professors; whereof we have in this Treatise given abundant Evidence.

To this Representation of their Lives and Manners, I have added some account concerning the antient Rites and Usages of the Church; wherein if any one shall meet with something that does not jump with his own Humour, he will, I doubt not, have more Discretion than to quarrel with me for setting down things as I found them. But in this part I have said the less, partly because this was not the thing I primarily designed, partly because it has been done by others in just Discourses. In some few Instances I have remarked the *Corruption* and *Degeneracy of the Church of Rome*, from the *Purity* and *Simplicity* of the *Antient Church*; and more I could easily have added, but that I studiously avoided Controversies: it being no part of my Design, to enquire what was the Judgment of the Fathers in disputable Cases, especially the more abstruse and intricate Speculations of Theology, but what was their Practice, and by what Rules and Measures they did govern and conduct their Lives. The truth is, their *Creed* in the first Ages was *short*

and

nd *ſimple*, their Faith lying then (as *Eraſmus* ob- *Præfat. in*
ſerves) not ſo much in *nice* and *numerous* Articles, as *Hilar. oper.*
n a *good* and an *holy* Life. At the end of the Book
I have added a Chronological *Index* of the *Authors*,
ccording to the Times wherein they are ſuppoſed
o have lived, with an account of the *Editions* of
heir Works made uſe of in this Treatiſe. Which
I did, not that I had a mind to tell the World,
ither what, or how many Books I had; a piece of
Vanity, of which had I been guilty, it had been no
hard matter to have furniſh'd out a much larger
Catalogue: But I did it partly to gratify the Re-
queſt of the Bookſeller, partly becauſe I conceiv'd
t might not be altogether unuſeful to the Reader,
or the *Index* to give ſome light to the Quotations,
by knowing when the Author lived, eſpecially when
he ſpeaks of things done in or near his own Time,
nd which muſt otherwiſe have been done at every
urn in the Body of the Book. And becauſe there
re ſome Writings frequently made uſe of in this
Book, the Authors whereof in this *Index* could be
reduc'd to no certain date, eſpecially thoſe that are
all'd the *Apoſtolical Canons* and *Conſtitutions*; it may
ot be amiſs here briefly to take notice of them.
And firſt, for the *Canons*; as I am far from their
Opinion who aſcribe them to the *Apoſtles*, ſo I
hink their great Antagoniſt Mr. *Daillee* bends the
Stick as much too far the other way; not allowing
hem a Being in the World till the Year 500, or
a *little* before. The Truth doubtleſs lies between
heſe two: 'Tis evident both from the Hiſtories of
he Church, and many Paſſages in *Tertullian*, *Cy-*
rian, and others, that there were in the moſt ear-
y Ages of Chriſtianity frequent Synods and Coun-
ils for ſettling the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the
hurch, tho the Determinations under that Notion
e not extant at this day. Part of theſe *Synodical*

Decrees, ſo many of them as concern'd the Rites and Diſcipline of the Church, we may conceive ſome Perſon of Learning and Judgment gather'd together probably about the Beginning of the third Century, and put them (eſpecially the firſt *Fifty*, for I look not upon the whole *Eighty Five* as of equal Value and Authority) if not into the ſame, into ſome ſuch ſort or method, wherein we now have them; ſtiling them *Eccleſiaſtical* or *Apoſtolical* Canons, not as if they had been compos'd by the *Apoſtles*, but either becauſe containing things conſonant to the Doctrines and Rules deliver'd by the Apoſtles, or becauſe made up of Uſages and Traditions ſuppos'd to be deriv'd from them; or laſtly, becauſe made by Antient and *Apoſtolick* Men. That many, if not all of theſe Canons were ſome conſiderable time extant before the firſt *Nicene* Council, we have great reaſon to believe, from two or three Paſſages amongſt many others. St. *Baſil*, giving Rules about Diſcipline, appoints a Deacon guilty of Fornication, to be depos'd and thruſt down into the rank of *Laicks*, and that in that capacity he might receive the Communion; *there being* (ſays he) ἀρχαῖον κανὼν, *an antient Canon that they that are depos'd ſhould only fall under this kind of Puniſhment: the Antients (as I ſuppoſe) following herein that Command, Thou ſhalt not puniſh twice for the ſame Fault.* This *Balſamon* joins with the twenty fifth *Canon* of the *Apoſtles*, which treats of the very ſame Affair; and indeed it cannot in probability be meant of any other, partly becauſe there was no antient Canon (that we know of) in St. *Baſil*'s time about this buſineſs but that, partly becauſe the ſame Sentence is apply'd as the reaſon both in the *Apoſtolical* and St. *Baſil*'s Canon, *Thou ſhalt not puniſh twice for the ſame Fault:* which clearly ſhews whence *Baſil* had it, and what he underſtands by

Ep. Conon. ad Amphil. Can. 3.

by his *antient Canon*. *Theodoret* records a Letter of *Alexander* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, to another of the ſame Name, Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, (this Letter was written a little before the Council of *Nice*) where, ſpeaking of ſome Biſhops who had receiv'd the *Arians*, whom he had excommunicated, into Communion, he tells them, *That herein they had done what the Apoſtolical Canons did not allow:* evidently referring to the twelfth and thirteenth *Canons* of the *Apoſtles*, which ſtate the Caſe about one Biſhop's receiving thoſe into Communion who had been excommunicated by another. To this let me add, that *Conſtantine*, in a Letter to *Euſebius*, commends him for refuſing to leave his own Biſhoprick to go over to that of *Antioch*, to which he was choſen; eſpecially *becauſe herein he had exactly obſerv'd the Rule of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and hath kept the Commands of God, and the Apoſtolical and Eccleſiaſtical Canon*; meaning doubtleſs the fourteenth *Apoſtolick Canon*, which treats about ſuch Removes. Nay, Learned Men, both formerly and of late, have obſerv'd divers Paſſages in the *Nicene* Canons themſelves, which plainly reſpect theſe Canons, as might be made appear (notwithſtanding what *Daillee* has excepted againſt it) were this a proper place to diſcourſe of it. This for the Canons.

Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 1. *c.* 4. *p.* 3.

De vit. Conſt. l. 3. *c.* 61. *p.* 518.

For the *Conſtitutions*, they are ſaid to have been compos'd by St. *Clemens*, at the Inſtance and by the Direction of the *Apoſtles*. And this wild and extravagant Opinion has not wanted its Patrons and Defenders, *Turrianus*, *Bovius*, &c. but herein deſerted by the more modeſt and moderate of their own Party; beſides that, their *Apoſtolicalneſs* (in this ſenſe) is by the Learned *Daillee* everlaſtingly ſhatter'd and broken. But then he ſets them at too wide a diſtance, aſſigning them to the latter end of the fifth Century; when 'tis as clear as the Sun, that

De Pſeudepigr. Ap. l. 2. *c.* 17. *p.* 409.

that they were extant and in credit with many before the times of *Epiphanius*, (tho ſomewhat alter'd now from what they were in his time) compil'd probably out of many leſſer Διδαχαὶ and Διαλῆξεις; Books containing the *Doctrines* and *Rites* that had been deliver'd and practis'd by Antient and *Apoſtolical* Perſons, or at leaſt vented under their Names: but whether, as ſome conjecture, compos'd by *Clemens Alexandrinus* (and thence by an eaſy miſtake aſcrib'd to *Clemens Romanus*) I am not at leiſure to conſider. In this Claſs of Writers I may reckon *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite*, abſurdly enough aſſerted by many to be genuine, by *Daillee* thruſt down to the beginning of the ſixth Century, but moſt probably thought to have been written about the middle of the fourth Age; as a Perſon amongſt us, deſervedly of great Name and Note, has ſhewn in his late *Vindication* of *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles. Theſe are the Principles of thoſe Authors, who could not be fix'd upon any certain Year; the reſt have in the *Index* their particular and reſpective times. To which I have added the account of the *Editions*, for the more ready finding (if occaſion be) of any Paſſage quoted out of them.

One thing indeed there is, which I cannot but take notice of, it looks ſo like a piece of Vanity and Oſtentation, That the Margin is charg'd with ſo many *Quotations*: but whoever conſiders the Nature of my Deſign, will quickly ſee that it was abſolutely neceſſary, and that it concern'd me not to deliver any thing without good Authority; the reaſon why I have, where I could, brought them in ſpeaking their own Words: tho, to avoid as much of the Charge as was poſſible, I omitted the citing Authors in their own Languages, and only ſet them down in *Engliſh*, faithfully repreſenting the Authors Senſe, tho not always tying my ſelf to

a ſtrict and preciſe Tranſlation. How pertinent my *Quotations* are, the Reader muſt judg; I hope he will find them exact, being immediately fetch'd from the Fountain-head; here being very few (if any) that have not been examin'd more than once. For the Method, into which the Book is caſt, I choſe that which to me ſeem'd moſt apt and proper; following St. *Paul*'s Diſtribution of Religion, into *Piety* towards God, *Sobriety* towards our ſelves, and *Righteouſneſs* towards others: and accordingly divided the Diſcourſe into three Parts, reſpecting thoſe three great Branches of Religion, tho the firſt is much larger than either of the other, by reaſon of ſome *preliminary* Chapters, containing a Vindication of the Chriſtians from thoſe Crimes that were charg'd upon them; that ſo the Rubbiſh being clear'd and thrown out of the way, we might have a fairer Proſpect of their Religion afterwards. The Book, I confeſs, is ſwell'd into a greater Bulk, than I either thought of or deſir'd; but by reaſon of ſomewhat a confus'd Copy, never deſign'd for the *Preſs*, no certain meaſures could be taken of it.

And now, if after all this it ſhall be enquir'd, why theſe Papers are made publick? as I can give no very good reaſon, ſo I will not trouble my ſelf to invent a bad one. It may ſuffice to intimate, that this Diſcourſe (long ſince drawn up at leiſure hours) lay then by me, when a tedious and uncomfortable Diſtemper (whereby I have been taken off from all *Publick* Service, and the Proſecution of *ſeverer* Studies) gave me too much opportunity to look over my Papers, and this eſpecially, which peradventure otherwiſe had never ſeen the light. Indeed, I muſt confeſs I was ſomewhat the eaſilier prevail'd with to let this Diſcourſe paſs abroad,

that it might appear, that when I could not do what I ought, I was at leaſt willing to do what I could. If he that reads it ſhall reap any Delight or Satisfaction by it, or be in any meaſure induc'd to imitate theſe Primitive Vertues, I ſhall think my Pains well beſtow'd: If not, I am not the firſt, and probably ſhall not be the laſt, that has written a Book to no purpoſe.

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Primitive Christianity:

OR THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Antient Christians,

IN THE

First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Things charg'd upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

Christian Religion likely to meet with opposition at its first setting out. Chiefly undermined by Calumnies and Reproaches. Three things by the Heathens charged upon the Christians; some things respecting their Religion; some their outward Condition; others their Moral Carriage, and the Matters of their Worship.

Their

Part I.

Their Religion charged with two things, Impiety and Novelty. The Charge of Atheiſm conſidered and anſwered out of the Fathers. The Heathens excepted againſt as Incompetent Judges of the Affairs of Chriſtianity. In what ſenſe Chriſtians confeſſed themſelves Atheiſts. The wretched and abſurd Deities that were amongſt the Heathens, and the impure manner of their Worſhip. Atheiſm, properly ſuch, diſowned and denied by Chriſtians. The Account they gave of their Religion, and the God whom they worſhipped.

NO ſooner did the SON of GOD appear in the World, to eſtabliſh the moſt excellent Religion that ever was communicated to Mankind, but he met with the moſt fierce and vigorous Oppoſition; perſecuted and devoted to death as ſoon as he was born, followed all his Life with freſh Aſſaults of Malice and Cruelty, his Credit traduced and ſlandered, his Doctrine deſpiſed and ſlighted, and himſelf at laſt put to death with the moſt exquiſite Arts of Torture and Diſgrace. And *if they thus ſerved the Maſter of the Houſe, how much more them of the Houſhold? The Diſciple not being above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord.* Therefore when he gave Commiſſion to his *Apoſtles*, to publiſh this Religion to the World, he told them before-hand what hard and unkind Reception they muſt look to meet with; *That he ſent them forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves, that they ſhould be delivered up to the Councils, and ſcourged in the Synagogues, and be brought before Kings and Governours, and be hated of all Men for his Name's ſake.* Nay, ſo high ſhould the Quarrel

rel arise upon the account of Religion, that Men should violate some of the nearest Laws of Nature, *betray their Friends and Kinsfolk*; *the Brother delivering up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Child*; *the Children rising up against their Parents, and causing them to be put to Death.* This he well foresaw (and the Event truly answered it) would be the Fate of its first appearing in the World: And indeed, considering the present State and Circumstances of the World at that time, it could not reasonably be expected, that the *Christian Religion* should meet with a better Entertainment; for the Genius and Nature of its *Doctrine* was such, as was almost impossible to escape the Frowns and Displeasure of Men: A Doctrine it was, that call'd Men off from Lusts and Pleasures, and offered Violence to their native Inclinations, that required the greatest Strictness and Severity of Life, obliged Men *to deny themselves, to take up their Cross*, and to *follow* the steps of a poor crucified *Saviour*; and that upon little other Encouragement at present, than the invisible Rewards of another World. It introduced *new* Rites and Ceremonies, unknown to those of former Ages, and such as did undermine the received and established Principles of that *Religion*, that for so many Generations had governed the World; it revealed and brought to light such Truths, as were not only contrary to the Principles of Men's Education, but many of them above the reach of natural Comprehension, too deep for the Line of Human Reason to fathom or find out. Chap. 1.

Upon these, and such like accounts, Christianity was sure to encounter with mighty *Prejudices* and potent Opposition; and so it did: For no sooner did it peep abroad in the World, but it was *every where spoken against*: Princes and Potentates, and the greatest Powers and Policies of the World, did

for

Part I. for some Ages confederate and combine together, to extirpate and banish it out of the World; and certainly, if Arms and Armies, if Strength and Subtilty, if Malice and Cruelty could have stifled it, it had been smothered in its Infancy and first delivery into the World. But notwithstanding all these Oppositions, it still lifted up its head in triumph, and out-braved the fiercest storms of Persecution; and as *Tertullian* told their Enemies, *By every exquisite act of Cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the Party; the oftner they were mowed down, the faster they sprang up again, the Blood of Christians making the Church's Soil more fat and fertile.* Hereupon the great Enemy of Mankind betook himself to other Counsels, and sought to undermine what he saw he could not carry by open Assault and Battery; he studied to leaven the Minds of Men with false and unjust Prejudices against *Christianity*, and to burden it with whole loads of Reproaches and Defamations; knowing no speedier way to hinder its *Reception*, than to blast its *Reputation*. For this purpose all the Arts of Spite and Malice were mustered up, and *Christians* confidently charged with all those Crimes that could render them and their Religion vile and infamous. Now the things that were charg'd upon the Christians were either such as respected their *Religion*, or such as concerned their *outward State and Condition*, or such as related to their *moral Carriage and Behaviour*, with some things relating to the matter or manner of their Worship. We shall consider them in order, and how the Christians of those Times vindicated themselves from these Imputations.

Apol. cult. p. 40.

The Christian Religion at its first coming abroad into the World, was mainly charged with these two things, **Impiety** and **Novelty**. For the first, 'twas commonly cry'd out against as a grand Piece of

of *Atheism* and *Impiety*, as an Affront to their Religion, and an undermining the very Being and Existence of their Gods. This is the Sum of the Charge, as we find it in the antient Apologists; more particularly *Cæcilius* the *Heathen*, in *Minutius Fælix*, accuses the *Christians* for a desperate, undone, and unlawful Faction, who by way of Contempt, did *snuff* and *spit* at the mention of their Gods, deride their Worship, scoff at their Priests, and despise their Temples as no better than *Charnel-Houses*, and heaps of Bones and Ashes of the Dead. For these, and such like Reasons, the *Christians* were every were accounted a Pack of *Atheists*, and their Religion **The Atheism**; and seldom it is that *Julian* the Emperor, calls *Christianity* by any other Name. Thus *Lucian* bringing in *Alexander* the Impostor, setting up for an Oracle-monger, ranks the *Christians* with *Atheists* and *Epicureans*, as those that were especially to be banished from his mysterious Rites. In answer to this Charge, the *Christians* pleaded especially these three things. Chap. 1. *J. Martyr. Ap. 1. p. 47. Athenag. Legat. p. 4. Arnob. l. 1. p. 7. Min. Fel. p. 7. Pseudomant. p. 888. Tom. 2.*

First, That the *Gentiles* were for the most part *incompetent* Judges of such Cases as these, as being almost wholly ignorant of the true State of the *Christian* Doctrine, and therefore unfit to pronounce Sentence against it. Thus when *Crescens* the Philosopher had traduced the *Christians* as Atheistical and Irreligious, *Justin Martyr* answers, That he talked about things which he did not understand, feigning things of his own head, only to comply with the humour of his seduc'd Disciples and Followers; that in reproaching the Doctrine of *Christ*, when he did not understand it, he discovered a most wicked and malignant Temper, and shewed himself far worse than the most Simple and Unlearned, who are not wont rashly to bear witness and determine in things not sufficiently known to them: *Just. Mart. loc. laud.*

Or

Part I. Or if he did understand its *Greatness* and *Excellency*, then he shewed himself much more base and disingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false, and concealing his inward Sentiments and Convictions, for fear lest he should be suspected to be a *Christian*. But *Justin* well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of *Christianity*, having formerly had Conferences and Disputations with him about these things; and therefore offer'd the *Senate* of *Rome* (to whom he then presented his *Apology*) if they had not heard the sum of it, to hold another Conference with him, even before the *Senate* it self; which he thought would be a Work worthy of so wise and grave a Council: Or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things; or, that if he did understand them, he knowingly dissembled it to his Auditors, not daring to own the Truth, as *Socrates* did in the face of Danger: an evident Argument, that he was οὐ φιλόσοφος ἀλλὰ φιλόδοξος, *not a Philosopher*, but a *Slave to popular Applause and Glory*.

J. Mart. Ap. 2. (*seu verius* 1.) *p.* 56, & *p.* 55.

Secondly, They did in some sort confess the Charge, That according to the vulgar Notion which the *Heathens* had of their *Deities*, they were *Atheists*, i. e. *Strangers and Enemies to them*; That the Gods of the Gentiles were at best but *Dæmons*, impure and unclean Spirits, who had long imposed upon Mankind, and by their Villanies, Sophistries, and Arts of Terror, had so affrighted the common People, who knew not really what they were, and who jndg of things more by Appearance than by Reason, that they called them Gods, and gave to every one of them that Name, which the *Dæmon* was willing to take to himself: and that they really were nothing but Devils, fallen and apostate Spirits, the *Christians* evidently manifested at every turn,

turn, forcing them to the confessing it, while by Prayer, and invocating the Name of the true God, they drove them out of possessed Persons, and therefore they trembled to encounter with a *Christian*, as *Octavius* triumphingly tells *Cæcilius*: That they entertained the most absurd and fabulous Notions of their Gods, and usually ascrib'd such things to them as would be accounted an horrible *shame* and *dishonour* to any wise and good Man; the Worship and mysterious Rites of many of them being so brutish and filthy, that the honester and severer *Romans* were asham'd on't, and therefore over-turned their Altars, and banished them out of the Roll of their Deities, tho their degenerate Posterity took them in again, as *Tertullian* observes; their Gods themselves so impure and beastly, their Worship so obscene and detestable, that *Julius Firmicus* advises them to turn their *Temples* into *Theatres*, where the secrets of their Religion may be delivered in *Scenes*, and to make their *Players Priests*, and that the common Rout may sing the *Amours*, the Sports and Pastimes, the Wantonnesses and Impieties of their Gods; no places being so fit for such a Religion as they. Besides the attributing to them Human Bodies, with many Blemishes and Imperfections, and subjection to the Miseries of Human Life, and to the Laws of Mortality; they could not deny them to have been guilty of the most horrid and prodigious Villanies and Enormities, Revenge and Murder, Incest and Luxury, Drunkenness and Intemperance, Theft and unnatural Rebellion against their Parents, and such like, of which their own Writings were full almost in every Page; which served only to corrupt and debauch the Minds and Manners of Youth: as *Octavius* tells his Adversary, where he pursues this Argument at large, with great Eloquence and Reason. Nay, those

Chap. 1.

Pag. 23.

Apol. c. 7. *p.* 7.

De Err. Prof. Relig. p. 9.

Min. Fæl. p. 19. *Vid. Arnob. adv. Gent. l.* 1. *p.* 7.

Part I. those among them that were most *inquisitive* and *serious*, and that entertained more abstract and refin'd Apprehensions of things than the common People, yet could not agree in any fit and rational Notion of a Deity; some ridiculously affirming one thing, and some another, till they were divided into a hundred different Opinions, and all of them farther distant from the *Truth*, than they were from one another: the Vulgar in the mean while, making Gods of the most brutish Objects, such as Dogs, Cats, Wolves, Goats, Hawks, Dragons, Beetles, Crocodiles, *&c.* This *Origen* against *Celsus* particularly charges upon the *Ægyptians*; *When you approach* (says he) *their sacred Places, they have glorious Groves and Chappels, Temples with goodly Gates, and stately Portico's, and many mysterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entered, and got within their Temples, you shall see nothing but a Cat or an Ape, or a Crocodile, or a Goat, or a Dog, worship'd with the most solemn Veneration.* Nay, they deified *senseless* and *inanimate things*, that had no Life or Power to help themselves, much less their *Worshippers*; Herbs, Roots, and Plants; nay, *unmanly and degenerate Passions*, Fear, Paleness, *&c.* fell down before Stumps and Statues, which owed all their Divinity to the Cost and Folly of their Votaries, despised and trampled on by the sorriest Creatures, Mice, Swallows, *&c.* who are wont to build Nests in the very *Mouth* of their Gods, and Spiders to *periwig* their Heads with *Cobwebs*; being forc'd first to *make them*, and then *make* them *clean*, and to *defend* and *protect* them, that they might *fear* and *worship* them, as he in *Minutius* wittily derides them: *in whose Worship there are* (says he) *many things that justly deserve to be laugh'd at, and others that call for Pity and Compassion.* And what wonder now if the *Christians* were not in the least ashamed to be call'd *Atheists*, with respect

Vid. Min. Fæl. p. 15, 16.

Adv. Cels. l. 3. *p.* 121.

Vid. Athanas. Orat. contr. Gent.

Min. Fæl. p. 20.

respect to such Deities, and such a Religion as this was? Chap. 1.

Thirdly, in the strict and proper Notion of *Atheism* they no less truly than confidently denied the Charge, and appealed to their severest Adversaries whether those who owned such Principles as they did, could reasonably be stiled *Atheists*. None ever pleaded better and more irrefragable Arguments for the Existence of a Supreme Infinite Being, who made and governs all things by Infinite Wisdom and Almighty Power; none ever more ready to produce a most clear and candid *confession* of their Faith, as to this grand Article of Religion, than they. Although we profess our selves *Atheists*, with respect to those whom you esteem and repute to be Gods *(so their Apologist tells the Senate)* yet not in respect of the true God; the Parent and Fountain of Wisdom and Righteousness, and all other Excellencies and Perfections, who is infinitely free from the least Contagion or Spot of Evil: *Him*, and his *only begotten Son* (who instructed us and the whole Society of good Angels in these Divine Mysteries) and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, we worship and adore, honouring them in Truth, and with the highest Reason, and ready to communicate these things to any one that's willing to learn them, as we our selves have received them. Can we then be *Atheists*, who worship the great *Creator* of this World, not with Blood, Incense, and Offerings, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands in no need of) but exalt him according to our Power, with Prayers and Praises, in all the Addresses we make to him; believing this to be the only Honour that's worthy of him, not to consume the Creatures which he has given us for our use, and the comfort of those that want, in the fire by Sacrifice; but to approve our selves thankful to him, and to sing and celebrate Rational Hymns and Sacrifices, pouring out our

J. Martyr. Ap. 1. p. 56.

Ib. p. 60.

Part I. Prayers to him as a grateful Return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him, according to the faith and trust that we have in him. To the same purpose *Athenagoras*, in his Return to his Charge: *Diagoras* indeed (says he) was guilty of the deepest Atheism and Impiety; but *we*, who separate God from all material Being, and affirm him to be Eternal and Unbegotten, but all Matter to be made and corruptible, how unjustly are we branded with Impiety? It's true, did we side with *Diagoras* in denying a Divinity, when there are so many and such powerful Arguments from the Creation and Government of the World to convince us of the Existence of God and Religion, then both the Guilt and Punishment of *Atheism* might deservedly be put upon us. But when our Religion acknowledges one God, the Maker of the Universe, who being uncreate himself, created all things by his Word, we are manifestly wrong'd both in Word and Deed; both in being charged with it, and in being punished for it. We are accused (says *Arnobius*) for introducing Profane Rites, and an Impious Religion; but tell me, O ye Men of Reason, how dare you make so rash a Charge? To adore the mighty God, the Sovereign of the whole Creation, the Governour of the highest Powers, to pray to him with the most obsequious Reverence; under an Afflicted State to lay hold of him with all our Powers, to love him, and to look up to him; is this a dismal and detestable Religion, a Religion full of Sacrilege and Impiety, destroying and defiling all antient Rites? Is this that bold and prodigious Crime, for which your Gods are so angry with us, and for which you your selves do so rage against us, confiscating our Estates, banishing our Persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to death with such ex-

Athen. leg. pro Christian. p. 5.

Lib. 1. p. 7.

exquiſite Tortures? *We Chriſtians* are nothing elſe but the Worſhippers of the ſupreme King and Governour of the World, according as we are taught by *Chriſt our Maſter*; ſearch, and you'll find nothing elſe in our Religion: This is the ſum of the whole affair, this the end and deſign of our Divine Offices; before him it is that we are wont to proſtrate and bow our ſelves, him we worſhip with common and conjoined Devotions, from him we beg thoſe things which are juſt and honeſt, and ſuch as are not unworthy of him to hear and grant. So little Reaſon had the Enemies of *Chriſtianity* to brand it with the Note of *Atheiſm* and *Irreligion*. Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

Of the Novelty that was charged upon Chriſtianity.

Chriſtianity excepted and cryed out againſt as a late Novel Doctrine. This a common Charge; continued when Chriſtianity had been ſome hundreds of Years in the World. Chriſtianity greatly prejudiced by this Charge. Men loth to forſake the Religion of their Anceſtors. What the Chriſtians anſwered to it. Chriſtian Religion the ſame in ſubſtance and effect with that of the antient Jews; *in that reſpect, by far the Oldeſt Religion in the World; prov'd and urg'd by* Tertullian, Cl. Alexandrinus, Euſebius, *&c. Its Lateneſs and Novelty no real prejudice to Rational and Unbyaſs'd Men. The Folly and Vanity of adhering to abſurd and unreaſo-*

Part. I.

reasonable Customs and Principles, because Antient; and of refusing to change Opinions for the better. An Objection; If Christ and Christianity were so great Blessings to Mankind, why was it so long before God revealed them? Answered out of Arnobius.

THis *Artifice* proving weak and ineffectual, the next Charge was its **Lateness and Novelty**, that is was an upstart Sect, and but of Yesterday's standing, not known in the World many Years before; whereas the Religion of the *Gentiles* had uncontroulably and almost universally obtained from Ages and Generations: A Doctrine newly sprung up, *and come, as 'twere, from a far Country* τὸ ὀδιόν] τῶ κατ' ἡμᾶς λόγε, as 'tis in *Theophilus Antiochenus*; a *Divorce*, or rendring themselves from the Institutions of their Ancestors, as *Tertullian* has it. This Charge begun betimes: when St. *Paul* preached at *Athens*, we find this the first thing charged upon him, *That he was a setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection*; and it was followed with a loud Cry in succeeding times. You are wont to object to us (says *Arnobius*) that our Religion is *novel*, started up not many days ago, and that you ought not to desert your antient way, and the Religion of your Country, to espouse *barbarous* and foreign Rites. And *Eusebius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to reason thus: What *strange* Profession of Religion is this? What *new* way of Life, wherein we can neither discern the Rites amongst us us'd in *Greece*, nor amongst any Sect of the *Barbarians?* Who can deny them to be *impious*, who have forsaken the Customs of their Fathers, observed before in all Cities and Countries, revolting from

Lib. 3. *p.* 119. *B.*

Ad Nation. l. 1. *c.* 10. *p.* 46.

Acts 17. 18.

Li. 2. *p.* 40.

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. §. 2. *p.* 5.

from a way of Worship which had been universally received from all Ages, both by *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, entertained both in Cities and Villages, countenanced and approved by the common Vote and Consent of all *Kings*, *Law-makers*, *Philosophers*, and the greatest Persons whatsoever. Nay, we may observe, that after *Christianity* had been settled for some hundreds of Years in the World, and was become the prevailing Religion, and had in a manner banished all others out of doors, and driven them into Corners, yet this Charge still continued. Thus *Julian* the Emperor, writing to the People of *Alexandria* concerning the *Galilæans*, (so he was wont in scorn to call the Christians) that he wondered that any of them durst dwell amongst them, or that they would suffer these Despisers of the Religion of their Country to be in any place amongst them; calls *Christianity*, the *new Doctrine* that had been preached to the World: the very same Title which *Lucian* had also long since bestowed upon it; where speaking of our *Saviour*, he calls him the Great Man that was crucified in *Palestine*, who introduced that *new* Religion into the World. So *Symmachus* some years after *Julian* (a Man no less eminent for his *Parts* and *Eloquence* than for his *Power* and *Authority*, being *Chief Priest* and *Prefect* of *Rome*) confidently owns to the *Emperors* themselves, (though they were *Christians*) that he did endeavour to defend the Institutions of their Ancestors, the settled Rites and Laws of the Country, (he means those of Religion) that he designed to settle that state of Religion, which for so many Ages had been profitable to the Commonwealth; and therefore begs of them, that what they had received when they were Children, now they were old they might leave to their Posterity; that they were to be true to the Trust

Chap. 2.

Ep. 51. *oper. Jul. part* 2. *p.* 208.

De mort. Peregrin. tom. 2. *p.* 762.

Symmach. ep. lib. 10. *ep.* 54. *ad Valent. Theod. Arcad. A. A. A. p.* 537.

Pag. 538.

Pag. 539.

Part. I. that had from ſo many Ages been devolved upon them, and were to follow their Parents, as they had happily done their Anceſtors, that had gone before them. So he, pleading the Cauſe of *Paganiſm* from its *Antiquity* and *Preſcription*, obliquely reflecting upon the *Novelliſm* of *Chriſtianity*, for more he durſt not ſpeak; the Emperors (to whom he made his Addreſs) being themſelves Chriſtians. This indeed muſt needs be a mighty *prejudice* againſt the *Chriſtian Religion* at its firſt coming into the World; for all Men as they have a natural *Reverence* for Religion, ſo they have a great *Veneration* for Antiquity, the Cuſtoms and Traditions of their Fathers, which they entertain as a moſt ineſtimable *depoſitum*, and for which they look upon themſelves as obliged to contend, as for that which is moſt Solemn and Sacred. What more excellent and venerable (ſays the Heathen in *Minutius Falix*) than to entertain the Diſcipline of our Fore-fathers, to ſolemnize that Religion which has been delivered to us; to worſhip thoſe Gods, the Knowledg of whom has been infus'd into us by our Parents; not boldly to determine concerning the Deities, but to believe thoſe who have been before us. To the ſame purpoſe, *Lactantius* ſpeaking of the Heathens, they go on (ſays he) moſt pertinaciouſly to maintain and defend the Religion derived down to them from their Anceſtors, not ſo much conſidering what they are, as concluding them to be right and good, becauſe the Antients conveyed them to them; nay, ſo great is the Power and Authority of Antiquity, that it's accounted a kind of *Impiety* to queſtion it, or enquire into it. Upon theſe accounts the *Gentiles* bore ſo hard upon *Chriſtianity*, beholding it as a *Muſhroom-Sect*, ſprung up of a ſudden, and as an incroaching Inmate, undermining the Eſtabliſhed Religion of the World.

Min. Fæl. p. 5.

Lact. l. 2. c. 6. p. 171.

Now

Now we find two Pleas especially, which the *Christians* made to this Indictment. Chap. 2.

First, That the Charge was not wholly and universally true: For besides that many Principles of *Christianity* were the same with those of the *Law of Nature*; the *Christian Religion* was for substance the same with that of the antient *Jews*, whose Religion claim'd the Precedency of all others in the World. That the Religion was in substance and effect the same, is expresly asserted and prov'd by *Eusebius*. The antient *Patriarchs* were the *Christians* of the old World, who had the same Faith, Religion and Worship common with us, nay, the same *Name* too, as he endeavours to prove from that, *Touch not mine Anointed*, μὴ ἅψησθε τῶν χριστῶν μου, *my Christ's*, or *Christians*: And how far superiour in Age they were to any thing that's recorded of the most *antient Gentiles*, to their oldest Writers, *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Hesiod*, nay to their very *Gods* themselves, is sufficiently made good by many of the antient Fathers; there being, at the easiest Computation, between *Moses* and *Homer* above 600 years: Nay, *Cadmus* (the first Inventor of Letters among the *Grecians*) was some Ages *Junior* unto *Moses*. Therefore *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that *Moses* and the Prophets were not only more antient than *Plato*, but than *Homer* himself; yea, than the very Invention of Letters amongst the *Grecians*, who yet were as proud of their *Antiquity* as any other Nation in the World. Nay, whatever useful and excellent Notions the great *Masters* of Religion amongst the *Heathens* had amongst them, 'tis plain they borrow'd, or more truly, *stole* them, from the Writings of the antient *Jews*, as is abundantly demonstrated by *Eusebius* at large; as before him it had been done by *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and by *Tertullian* before them both; who shews, that all their *Poets*, and

Demonstr. Evang. l. 1. c. 5. p. 2, &c.

Vid. Athen. leg. pro Christianis, p. 16. Clem. Alex. strom. lib. 1.

Adv. Cels. l. 6. p. 279.

Præpar. Evang. l. 10. tot. Cl. Alex. strom. l. 1. p. 320. Tert. Ap. c. 47. Vide Theod. de curand. Gr. Affect. Serm. 2. de princip.

Part I.

and *Philosophers* had drunk deep of the *Fountain* of the Prophets, and had forced their best Doctrines and Opinions from thence, tho subtilly altering and disguising them, to make them look more like their own. So that upon this Consideration, the Accusation was unjust and false, and *Christianity* appears the oldest Religion in the World.

Secondly, Admit the *Christian* Religion in a more limited and restrained Sense, to be of a far *later* standing than the Religion of the *Gentiles*, yet they pleaded, that 'twas infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better, whenever it offered it self to them; that *novel Truth* was better than *antient Error*, and that they ought not to be eternally bound up in old inveterate Customs and Principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable and satisfactory were presented to them. You tell us (says *Clemens Alex.*) that you may not subvert the Customs receiv'd from your Ancestors: But if so, why then are we not content without any other *Food* than our *Mother's Milk*, to which we were accustomed when we first came into the World? Why do we *increase* or *impair* our Estates, and not rather keep them at the same pitch, just as we received them from our Fathers? Why have we left off those Toys and Sports, to which we were wonted while Infants and Children, but only because Years and Discretion (altho we had no other Tutor) would make us quit those childish and trifling Vanities? That old Age (says St. *Ambrose*) has true cause to blush, that is asham'd to *reform*. 'Tis not *multitude of Years*, but the *Goodness of Manners* that makes grey Hairs worthy of Praise and Honour. No Age is too late to learn, nor is it shame to grow better. What wilt thou do (says *Lactantius* to the Heathen) wilt thou follow *Reason* or thy *Ancestors?* If Reason, then thou must needs relinquish

Admonit. ad Gent. p. 57.

Ambr. ep. 2. *contr. Symmach. inter Ep. Symmach. p.* 562.

Lact. loco supra laudato.

quiſh the Authority and Inſtitutions of thy Fore- Chap. 2.
fathers, becauſe that way only can be right, that
is warranted and preſcrib'd by Reaſon: But if Pie-
ty towards thine Anceſtors ſway with thee to fol-
low them, thou muſt confeſs both that they were
Fools in devoting themſelves to a Religion contrary
to Reaſon, and that thou thy ſelf art unwiſe and
ſimple in worſhipping what thou art convinced to
be falſe: Beſides, that they had little reaſon to boaſt
of thoſe goodly Anceſtors, to whom they adhered ſo
cloſe, and upon whoſe Authority they did ſo much
depend; as he goes on to demonſtrate in the remain-
ing part of that Chapter. That you object to us the
Novelty of our Religion (ſo *Arnobius*) may we not *Adv. Gent.*
charge ſome ſuch fault upon the firſt and moſt an- *l.* 2. *p.* 40,
tient Ages of the World, who at firſt lived in a very 41.
poor and mean State; but by little and little changed
it into a more liberal and ſplendid courſe of Life?
Was it any Crime that they changed their *Beaſts-*
Skins into more *comely* and *convenient Garments*, or
that they were no longer fond of their *thatched Cot-*
tages, or choſe to dwell like wild Beaſts in Rocks and
Caverns, when they had learnt to build better *Habita-*
tions? 'Tis natural to all Mankind to prefer better
before what is worſe, profitable before what is uſe-
leſs, and to ſeek after what we are aſſured is more
grateful and excellent. Therefore when you charge
us with Apoſtacy from the Religion of the An-
tients, you ſhould rather conſider the *Cauſe* than
the *Action*, and not ſo much upbraid us with what
we have left, as examine what it is we have *enter-*
tained. For if merely to change our Opinion, and
to paſs from antient Inſtitutions to what's more
late and new, be a Fault and Crime; then none ſo
guilty of the Charge as your ſelves, who have ſo
oft changed your Manners and Courſe of Life, and
by embracing new Rites and Cuſtoms, have con-
demned thoſe that went before: which he there
makes

Part I. makes good by particular Instances. And the same Answer St. *Ambrose* gives to *Symmachus*; If nothing but antient Rites will please you, how comes it to pass that there has been a Succession of new and foreign Rites even in *Rome* it self? Of which he gives him many particular Examples. In short, *Ambrose* wittily argues thus: *Our way of Religion* (you say) *is new, and yours antient; and what does this either hurt our Cause, or help yours? If ours be new, 'twill in time become old. Is yours old? There was a time when it was new. The Goodness and Authority of Religion is not to be valu'd by length of Time, but by the Excellency of its Worship; nor does it become us to consider so much when it begun, as what it is we worship.*

Ib. p. 42.

Ib. p. 43. Vid. Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catechet. c. 29. Tom. 2. p. 521.

It may not be impertinent in this place to take notice of what the Heathens objected as a Branch of this Charge; that if God's sending *Christ* into the World was so great a Blessing, why did this *Saviour* of Mankind come no *sooner* to reveal this Religion, to lead Men into the Truth, to tell the World who this true God was, and to reduce us to the Adoration of him? If so, why did God suffer him to stay so long, and to be born (as 'twere) but a few hours before, in comparison of the preceding Ages of the World? To this *Arnobius* answers with a great deal of *Modesty* and *Reason*, That he could not tell; that 'twere easy to retort the same captious Question upon them: if 'twere so much to the benefit of the World, that *Hercules*, *Æsculapius*, *Mercury*, &c. should be Gods, why were they born and deify'd no *sooner*, that not only Posterity but Antiquity might have reap'd advantage by them? If there was reason in one case, then there was also in the other; but to assign proper and particular Reasons, was not possible; it not being within the power of such a short-sighted Creature as Man is, to fathom the depth of the Divine Counsels, or to discover by what ways or methods

methods he diſpoſes his Affairs; theſe things being known only to him who is the grand Parent, the Sovereign Lord and Governor of all things: That altho we are not able to aſſign the Cauſe why a thing comes to paſs in this or that particular manner, yet this concludes never a whit the more that the thing is not ſo, or that it is leſs credible, when it has otherwiſe the moſt clear and unqueſtionable Evidence and Demonſtration. More particularly he anſwers, that our *Saviour* cannot be ſaid to have been lately ſent in reſpect of God, becauſe in reſpect of Eternity there is nothing late: where there is neither *beginning* nor *end*, there can be nothing *too ſoon*, nothing *too late*. Time indeed is tranſacted by Parts and Terms, but theſe have no place in a perpetual and uninterrupted *Series* of eternal Ages. What if that State of Things, to which he came to bring relief, required that *Seaſon* of Time to come in? What if the Condition of antient and modern Times were in this Caſe not alike, or called for ſomewhat different Methods of Cure? It may be the great God then choſe to ſend *Chriſt*, when the State of Mankind was more *broken* and *ſhattered*, and human Nature become more weak and unable to help it ſelf. This we are ſure of, that if what ſo lately came to paſs had been neceſſary to have been done ſome thouſands of years ago, the Supreme Creator would have done it; or had it been neceſſary to have been done thouſands of years hence, nothing could have forced God to have anticipated the ſettled Periods of Time one moment: For all his Actions are managed by fixed and eternal Reaſons, and what he has once determined, cannot be fruſtrated by any Change or Alteration. And thus we ſee how eaſily, and yet how ſatisfactorily the *Primitive Chriſtians* wiped off that double Imputation of *Impiety* and *Novelty*, which the *Gentiles* had ſo undeſervedly caſt upon their Religion.

Chap. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Things charged upon the Christians respecting their outward Condition.

The Christians looked upon, and despised by the Heathens, as a Company of rude and illiterate Persons, Mechanicks, silly Women and Children. This Charge considered and largely answered by Origen. *Christianity provides for the truest and best Knowledg; it excludes none, learned or unlearned. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledg of their Mysteries to Men sober and inquisitive. The Efficacy of Christianity in prevailing upon Men of the acutest Parts and greatest Learning. The Christians accused for being poor and mean. This Charge (universally) false. Christianity entertained by Persons of all sorts, of the highest as well as the lowest Rank. Several Instances of such:* Fl. Clemens *and* Fl. Domitilla (Domitian's *near Kindred) Christians; another* Domitilla, Domitian's *Niece,* Acil. Glabrio *the Consul,* Apollonius *the Senator, and others.* Philip *the Emperor proved to be no Christian; the rise of the Story whence. Tho Christianity had had no such Persons under its Profession, this had been no just reasonable Prejudice. External Pomp and Grandeur not necessary to Religion. The Advantages Christians reaped from their Meanness and Contempt of the World. Of their*

being

being charged as a People useless and unser- Chap. 3.
viceable to the Publick. This disowned. The Opinion that it was not lawful for Christians to bear Arms or Offices, particular only to some Persons and in some Cases, and why. How much the World was beholden to Christians for reclaiming Men from Vice and Wickedness. The Gospel greatly instrumental that way; its general Influence upon those whom it did not convert: The Writings of Philosophers generally better after Christianity appeared, and why. The excellent Prayer of Simplicius. *Christians very useful by frequent working beneficial Miracles, curing Diseases, raising the Dead, dispossessing Devils,* &c. *This miraculous Power continued for several Ages in the Church. Christians further traduced as pernicious to the World, as the Cause of all publick Evils and Calamities. This objected at every turn. The occasion of St.* Augustine's *and* Orosius's *writing a Vindication of it. This Charge justly retorted upon the Heathens, and they sent to seek the Cause of publick Calamities nearer home. Some few hinted by* Tertullian. *Christians unjustly charged with it, because the World was pestered with such Evils before Christianity appeared in it. The publick State better and more prosperous since Christianity than before. Its Prosperity ebbed or increased according to the Entertainment Christianity found in the World.*

THE

THE ſecond ſort of *Arts* which the Enemies of *Chriſtianity* made uſe of, to render *Chriſtians* vile and deſpicable, related to the Circumſtances of their **External State and Condition** in the World; where two things were laid to their Charge, that they generally were *a very mean and inconſiderable ſort of Men*, and that they were *an uſeleſs and unſerviceable People*, nay *pernicious* and *miſchievous* to the World. They were looked upon as the *loweſt* and *meaneſt* Rank of Men, Perſons neither conſiderable for their *Parts* and *Learning*, nor for their *Eſtates* and *Quality*. Inconſiderable they were accounted in reſpect of *Parts* and *Learning*: *You ſcorn and ſpit us out as rude and ſimple, and think that the Treaſury of all Divine and Excellent Knowledg is open only to your ſelves*, as *Arnobius* tells them. Thus *Celſus* objected, that amongſt the *Chriſtians* no wiſe and learned Men were admitted to the *Myſteries* of their Religion. Let no Man come that is learned, wiſe and prudent; for theſe things (ſays he) they account evil and unlawful: but if any be unlearned, an Infant or an Idiot, let him come and welcome; openly declaring, that none but Fools, and ſuch as are devoid of Senſe and Reaſon, Slaves, ſilly Women and little Children are fit Diſciples for the God they worſhip. We may obſerve (ſays he) theſe trifling and *Mountebank Impoſtors*, bragging great things to the Vulgar, not in the Preſence and Company of wiſe Men (for that they dare not) but wherever they eſpy a Flock of Boys, Slaves, and weak ſimple People, there they preſently croud in, and boaſt themſelves. You ſhall ſee (as he goes on in this Charge) Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the moſt ruſtick and illiterate Fellows, at home, when before their Elders and Betters, as mute as Fiſhes; but when they can get a few Children and ſilly Women by themſelves, then who ſo wiſe

Adv. Gent. l. 3. *p.* 49.

Orig. contr. Celſ. l. 3. *p.* 137.

Ib. p. 141.

Pag. 144.

wise and learned, who so full of Talk, and so able to teach and instruct as they? Much to this purpose, *Cæcilius* discourses in *Minutius Fælix*, that the *Christians* were Men of a *desperate* and *unlawful Faction*, who gathering a Company out of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People, of silly, easy, credulous Women, who by reason of the weakness of their Sex, are easily impos'd and wrought upon, combine them into a wicked Confederation; a People *mute* in *publick*, but in *Corners talkative and full of Prattle*. Now to this part of the Accusation *Origen* answers, That 'tis for the main *false*, and proceeds from the Spirit of Malice and Reproach. The *Sum* of his Answer, as he delivers it to the several Parts of the Charge, take thus: That the *Christian Doctrine* invites, and calls Men to Wisdom, as appears both from the Writings of the *Jews* of old, and the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, wherein we find many singularly eminent for Wisdom and Learning, *Moses*, *Solomon*, *Daniel*, and such like of old, and the blessed *Jesus* made choice of such Disciples, as whom he judged fittest to communicate the Secrets of his Religion to, and privately opened and explained to them, what he only delivered in Parables and Similitudes unto others; that he promis'd to *send forth Prophets, wise Men* and *Scribes*, for the divulging and propagating of his Doctrine; that St. *Paul* reckons *Wisdom* and *Knowledg* in the first Rank of the *Gifts of God*; and that if he any where seem to reflect severely upon Wisdom or human Learning (which probably may be the first rise of this Charge) he only censures the *Abuse*, never intending to blame the thing it self; that when he prescribes the Property of a *true Bishop*, or Governor of the Church, he requires this as one necessary Qualification, *That he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the Gainsayers*. That we are so far from prohibiting

Chap. 3.

Min. Fæl. p. 7.

Pag. 137. *& seq.*

Mat. 23. 34

1 *Cor.* 12. 8.

Tit. 1. 9.

Part I. hibiting any, that come who will, Wise, Learned and Prudent, provided the Rude, Simple and Unlearned be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a Remedy, making them meet for God. That no Man but must confess that 'tis an excellent thing to study the best Arts and Discipline, and that Learning, the study of Arts and Prudence, are so far from being an hindrance to the Knowledg of God, that they mightily help it and advance it. That it's a great Calumny to compare us to *wandring Impostors*, who by our reading and expounding the Divine Oracles, do only exhort the People to *Piety* towards the great God, and to the rest of those *Virtues* which are its individual Companions: endeavouring to rescue Men from a Contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular Passions; a thing which the very best Philosophers of them all could wish for. That *Christians* are so far from admitting any hand over head, that they first pre-examine the Minds of those that desire to become their Auditors; and having privately had Trial of them, before they receive them into the Congregation, when they perceive them fully resolv'd to lead a pious and religious Life, then they admit them in their distinct Orders; some that are newly admitted, but not *yet baptiz'd*; others that have given some Evidence and Demonstration of their purpose to live as becomes Christians: amongst whom there are *Governors* appointed to inspect and inquire into the Life and Manners of those who have been admitted, that they may expel and turn off those *Candidates* of Religion who answer not their Profession, and heartily entertain those that do, and by daily Converses build them up and make them better. That it's false to say that we apply our selves only to *Women* and *Children*, and that in *Corners*, when we endeavour what we can by

by all means to fill our Societies with Wiſe and Prudent Perſons, and to ſuch we open the more *ſublime* and *recondite Principles* of Religion, otherwiſe accommodating our Diſcourſes to the Capacities of meaner Perſons, who ſtand more in need of *Milk* than *ſtrong Meat:* That we deſire that all Men may be trained up in the Word of God, and that Servants and Children may have ſuch Inſtructions given them, as are ſutable and convenient to them; the Miniſters of our Religion profeſſing themſelves to be Debtors both to the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, both to the *Wiſe* and to the *Unwiſe*, that as much as may be they may outgrow their Ignorance, and attain to the beſt kind of Wiſdom. And whereas we are accuſed to ſeduce and circumvent *ſilly Women* and *little Children*, and to draw them away from more weighty and ſerious Counſels; let him produce any ſuch, and inquire of them whether ever they heard better *Maſters* than ours, or if they did, why they would leave ſo grave a Diſcipline, and ſuffer themſelves to be ſeduced in a worſe? But he'll find no ſuch thing to faſten upon us; but that, on the contrary, we reclaim *Women* from Immodeſty, from falling out with their Husbands, and parting from them, from the wild Extravagancies of the Sports and Theatres, and from all Superſtition whatſoever. The Youth, who are prone to Vice and Luxury, we reſtrain, by telling them not only how baſe and degenerous a thing it is to indulge their Luſt, but into how much Danger they precipitate their Souls, and what Puniſhments the Divine Vengeance lays up for ſuch profligate Offenders. We openly (not in Corners) promiſe Eternal Happineſs to thoſe who live according to the Rules of the Divine Law, who ſet God always before their Eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themſelves to him: And is this the Chap. 3.

Part I. *Discipline*, these the *Doctrines* of Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most rustick and illiterate Persons? Surely no. If at any time we refuse to produce our Instructions and Counsels before *Masters of Families* or the *Doctors of Philosophy*, know, that if they be studious of *Vertue*, Enemies to Vice, and such as breathe after the best things, before such we are most willing and ready to instruct our Youth, being well assur'd we shall find them favourable Judges. But if they be Enemies to Goodness and Vertue, and Opposers of sound wholesom Doctrine, then if we hold our peace, no fault can justly be laid upon us: For in such Circumstances the Philosophers themselves would not discover the Dictates and Mysteries of their Philosophy. This is the *Substance* of the several Answers, which *Origen* pursues more at large through several Pages: Which, though very rational and satisfactory, yet we find something pleaded more direct and positive to the Charge; *viz.* That although amongst the *Christians* (as 'tis in any Society of Men) the vulgar and more common sort might not be Men of the sharpest Understanding, or vers'd in the more polite Arts of Learning, yet wanted they not (and those no small Number) great *Scholars*, Men of accute Parts, and raised Abilities, such as had run thro the whole *Circle* of the *Sciences*, who daily came over to them. So *Arnobius*, urging the triumphant Power and Efficacy which the Christian Faith had over the Minds of Men, Who (says he) would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the World; when Men of so great Wit and Parts, *Orators*, *Grammarians*, *Rhetoricians*, *Lawyers*, *Physicians*, and *Philosophers*, have thrown up those former Sentiments, of which but a little before they were so tenacious, and have embrac'd the Doctrine of the Gospel? So fast did the *Christian Church* fill with the most

Adv. Gent. l. 2. p. 21.

most eminent Professors of all parts of Learning that were then known to the World. Chap. 3.

Nor were the *Christians* of those times more despised upon the account of their *Weakness* and *Ignorance*, than they were for their *Meanness* and *Poverty*. They were looked upon as *de ultima face*, as the *Scum* and *Refuse* of the People, scarce a considerable Man to be found amongst them. See (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) the most and best of all your Party are a *poor*, *beggerly*, *hunger-starv'd* Generation, that have neither Riches nor Reputation to bear them out. This Charge (however impertinent, seeing the *Goodness* of any Religion depends not upon the *Greatness* of its Professors) was yet as *untrue* as 'twas *unreasonable*; the *Christians* having amongst them Persons of the choicest Place and Quality, and after some Years, the Princes and Potentates of the World, and even the *Emperors* themselves struck sail to the *Scepter of Christ*. When *Scapula*, the *President* of *Carthage*, threatened the *Christians* with severe and cruel Usage, *Tertullian* bids him bethink himself; What wilt thou do (says he) with so many thousands of Men and Women of every Sex, Age, and Dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What *Fires*, what *Swords* wilt thou stand in need of? What is *Carthage* it self like to suffer, if *decimated* by thee; when every one shall find there his near Kindred and Neighbours, and shall see there Matrons, and Men perhaps of thine own Rank and Order, and the most principal Persons, and either the Kindred or Friends of those who are thy own neerest Friends? Spare them therefore for *your own* sake, if not *for ours*. And if there were Persons of such Quality in *Africk* (so remote and in a manner so barbarous a Province) what may we suppose there were in *Rome* it self, and other Parts of the *Roman Empire*?

Pag. 9.

Ad Scap. c. 4. *p.* 71.

Cap. 37. *p.* 30.

Part I. And in his *Apology*, ſpeaking of the vaſt ſpreading of the Party; Tho (ſays he) we be Men of quite another way, yet have we filled all places among you; your *Cities*, *Iſlands*, *Caſtles*, *Corporations*, *Councils*, nay, your *Armies* themſelves, your *Tribes*, *Companies*, yea the *Palace*, the *Senate*, and the *Courts of Juſtice*; only your *Temples* we have left you *free*.

Lib. 10. *Ep.* 97. Sure I am, *Pliny*, in his Letter to the *Emperor*, tells him, That *Chriſtianity* had not only over-run City and Country, but it had infected many of *every* Sex, Age, and Order of Men.

And indeed, it were no hard matter, out of the antient *Hiſtories* and *Martyrologies* of the Church, nay from the *Heathen* Writers themſelves, to prove, that Perſons of the higheſt Rank and Quality (even in thoſe times) embrac'd *Chriſtianity*, and ſeal'd it with their Blood. Of which, it may ſuffice to give an account only of ſome few. Not to inſiſt upon the *Saints*, which St. *Paul* tells us were in *Nero*'s Palace, we find many conſiderable Perſons, and ſome of them near a-kin to the *Emperor* under the Reign of *Domitian* (that cruel Prince and Perſecutor of *Chriſtians*) entertaining the Profeſſion of the *Goſpel*. And firſt let us hear the Account which *Dion Caſſius*, the famous Hiſtorian, gives us. He tells us, That about the latter end of *Domitian*'s Reign he condemned many (ſome whereof were ſlain, others ſtrip'd of their *Eſtates*) and amongſt the reſt *Flavius Clemens* the *Conſul*, his own Couſin-german, and his Wife *Flavia Domitilla*, near *a-kin* alſo to the *Emperor*, upon pretence of *Atheiſm* (ἐπηνέχθη ἔγκλημα ἀθεότητος) and for that they had embrac'd the Rites and Religion of the *Jews*. His Nephew *Clemens* he put to Death, his Wife *Domitilla* he baniſh'd into the Iſland *Pandateria*. Upon the ſame account alſo he put to death *Acilius Glabrio*, who together with *Trajan* had been *Conſul* the year before.

Lib. 67. *in Domit. p.* 776.

That

That the Persons here described were *Christians*, is plain, partly from the Charge of *Atheism* here fastened upon them (the common and familiar Accusation, and the Title given to *Christianity* by the Heathens, as we observed before) and partly because they are said to have passed over to the Rites and Customs of the *Jews:* nothing being more ordinary in the Historians of those times, than to mistake *Christians* for *Jews*, and to call them so, because both proceeded out of the same Country; *Christ* himself and his *Apostles* being *Jews* born, and his Religion first publish'd and planted there. And that which may give some more countenance to this, is, that *Suetonius*, speaking of *Domitian*'s condemning this *Fl. Clemens*, represents him as a Man *contemptissimæ inertiæ*, as a most contemptibly dull and sluggish Person; which we know was generally charg'd upon the *Christians*, that they were an *useless* and *unactive* People, as we shall have occasion by and by more particularly to remark. Besides this *Fl. Domitilla*, the Wife of *Clemens*, there was another of the same Name, his Niece by the Sister's side (unless *Dion Cassius* mistook, and put down *Wife* for *Niece*, which there's no reason to suppose, seeing both may very well consist together) who (as *Eusebius* informs us) was with many more banish'd by *Domitian* in the fifteenth Year of his Reign into the Island *Pontia*, and there put to death for the Profession of *Christianity*; whose Persecutions and Martyrdoms (says he) are recorded by heathen Writers themselves: Amongst whom (I suppose) he principally intends *Brettius* or *Brutius* the Historian, whom he cites elsewhere, and out of whom he there quotes this very Passage; *That under* Domitian *many of the Christians suffered Martyrdom, amongst whom was* Fl. Domitilla, *Niece by the Sister's side to* Fl. Clemens, *the Consul; who for being a Chri-*

Chap. 3.

In Domitian. c. 15. *p.* 803.

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. *c.* 18. *p.* 89.

Can. Chron. ad An. Chr. 97. *p.* 208. *& Chron. p.* 80. *edit. Græc.*

Part I. *stian was baniſh'd into the Iſland* Pontia. She is ſaid, after a great deal of hard and tedious Uſage, to have been *burnt*, together with the Houſe wherein ſhe was: her Memory celebrated in the *Roman Calendar* upon the 7th of *May*.

Martyr. Rom. ad 7 Maii.

Beſides theſe, we find that *Chriſtianity* getting ground under the quiet Reign of the Emperor *Commodus*, many of the greateſt Birth and Fortunes in *Rome*, together with their whole Families, flock'd over to the *Chriſtian* Faith. Amongſt whom was *Apollonius*, a Man famous for Philoſophy, and all polite human Literature, who ſo gallantly pleaded his Cauſe before the *Senate*, and was himſelf a *Senator*, as St. *Hierom* informs us. I ſhall but mention one Inſtance more, and that is of *Philip* the *Emperor*, whom *Euſebius* expreſly affirms to have been a *Chriſtian*, and the firſt of the *Emperors* that was ſo, followed herein by a whole Troop both of antient and modern Writers. Nay, we are told by ſome a formal Story, that this *Philip* and his *Son* were converted by the preaching of *Pontius* the Martyr, and baptized by *Fabian*, Biſhop of *Rome*. But notwithſtanding the Smoothneſs of the Story, and the Number of Authorities, I muſt confeſs it ſeems to me ſcarcely probable, that a Perſon of ſo bad a Life, guilty of ſuch enormous Villanies, as that *Emperor* was, ſhould either be, or be thought a *Chriſtian*; or if he was, that the whole World ſhould not preſently ring of it. Certain I am, that all Hiſtorians of that time are wholly ſilent in the caſe, nor is there the leaſt Intimation of any ſuch thing in any Writer, either *Heathen* or *Chriſtian*, before *Euſebius*. Nay *Origen*, who wrote his Book in defence of *Chriſtianity* under the Reign of this very *Emperor*, and about this very time (nay, and two Epiſtles, one to *Philip*, the other to his Wife *Severa*, if we may believe *Euſebius*) yet not only makes

Euſeb. l. 5. c. 21. p. 189.

De Script. Eccl. in Apol.

Lib. 6. c. 34. p. 232.

Act. Pont. apud Sur. ad 14 Maii, tom. 3.

makes no mention of it, when it would have made greatly for his purpose, but tacitly implies there was no such thing. For *Celsus* reproving the *Boldness* and *Petulancy* of the *Christians*, as if they should give out, that if they could but bring over the present *Emperors* to their Religion, all other Men would quickly be brought over; *Origen* point-blank denies the Charge, and tells him there's no need of any Answer, for that none of the *Christians* ever said so. An Answer which surely he would not have given, had the *Emperor* at that time been a *Christian:* Not to insist upon many other Intimations which might be produc'd out of that Book against it. Besides, *Eutropius* reports, that *Philip* and his *Son* being slain by the Soldiers, were yet *inter Divos relati*, *deified*, or advanced into the number of their *Gods:* An *Honour* which 'tis certain the *Senate* would not have done them, had they either been, or but suspected to have been *Christians*. To all which I may add, that *Eusebius* himself (in whom the first Footsteps of this Story appear) builds it upon no better a Foundation than a κατέχει λόγος, a bare *Tradition* and *Report*. That which seems to have given both Birth and Colour to the Story, is this: One *Philippus*, an *Illustrious* Person under the Emperor *Severus*, was a long time *Governor* of *Egypt*; he, by the means of his Daughter *Eugenia*, was converted to *Christianity*, under whose shelter the *Christians* there enjoyed great Peace and Favour; (nay the Story adds, tho certainly without any ground, that he was created Bishop of *Alexandria*) till the Emperor, being acquainted with his being a Christian, presently removed him, and by the help of his Successor *Terentius*, caused him to be secretly murdered and made away. This (if any thing) was the rise of the Story; and that which makes it more probable, is, the

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Adv. Cels. l. 8. p. 425.

Hist. Rom. l. 9. non longè ab init.

Lib. 7. c. 34.

Martyr. Eugen. apud Sur. ad 25 Decem. tom. 6.

Part I. Honour and Excellency of that Imployment, the greateſt of all the Offices in the *Roman* Empire, the Command and State little leſs than *Regal*; and therefore the Emperors, in their Letter to this *Philip*, (wherein they reproach him for *Ingratitude* and *Apoſtacy*) tell him, that in a manner he was made a *King*, when he was choſen *Preſident* of *Egypt*. Accordingly the Title of the Governor of *Egypt* (as appears from the *Hiſtorians*, but eſpecially the *Notitia Imperii*) was *Præfectus Auguſtalis*: and how eaſy was it to miſtake *Philippus Auguſtus*, for *Philippus Auguſtalis*? But enough of this, as alſo the Falſeneſs of that Charge, that the *Chriſtians* were ſuch a *ſorry inconſiderable* People.

But however, let us ſuppoſe them to have been as *mean* and *poor*, as the Malice and Cruelty of their Adverſaries did endeavour to make them; yet this was no real Prejudice to their Cauſe, nor any great hurt to them. That the moſt part of us are accuſed to be *poor* (*ſays* Octavius *in anſwer to* Cæcilius's *Charge*) 'tis not our *Diſhonour*, but our *Glory*; the Mind, as 'tis diſſolved by Plenty and Luxury, ſo 'tis ſtrengthned and girt cloſe by Indigence and Frugality: and yet how can that Man be *poor*, who *wants* not, who is not greedy of what's another Man's, who is rich in and towards God? That Man is rather *poor*, who when he has a *great deal*, deſires *more*. The truth is, no Man can be ſo poor, as he was when he was *born*: The *Birds* live without any Patrimony entail'd upon them, and the *Beaſts* find Paſtures every day; and yet theſe are born for our uſe, all which we fully enjoy, when we do not *covet* them: Much *lighter* and *happier* does he go to Heaven, who is not *burdened* by the way with an *unneceſſary* load of Riches: And yet did we think *Eſtates* ſo uſeful to us, we could beg them of God, who being the *Lord* of all, might well afford a little to us; but we

we had rather *despise* them than *enjoy* them, and rather chuse Innocency and Patience, desiring more to be *Good*, than to be *Great* and *Prodigal*. If we endure outward Sufferings and Tortures, 'tis not so much *Pain* as 'twas a *Warfare*; our Courage is encreas'd by Infirmities, and Calamity is very often the *Discipline* of Vertue: The *Nerves* both of Body and Mind, without exercise, would grow loose and faint; and therefore God is neither *unable* to help us, nor yet *negligent* of us, as being the Governour of the World and the *Father* of his Children; but *tries* and examines every one's Temper in an adverse State, as *Gold is tried in the Fire*. Besides, it must needs be a sight very pleasing to God, to behold a *Christian* conflicting with Grief and Misery, preparing himself to *encounter* Threatnings and Torments, pressing in upon the very Noise of *Death* and the Horror of the Executioner, maintaining his Liberty against Kings and Princes, and only yielding to God, whose he wholly is, coming off from all the Attempts of Adversity with Victory and Triumph. So argues that *excellent Person*, (and whoever reads him in his *native* Language must confess it) with equal strength of *Eloquence and Reason*; where he also briefly touches that *Objection* so common amongst the Heathens, That if *Christians* were so *dear* to God, why then did he suffer them to be oppress'd with so many Miseries and Troubles, and not come in to vindicate and relieve them? An Argument fully cleared by *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and other antient *Apologists* for the Christian Faith.

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But this was not all, they were charged as a very *useless* and *unserviceable* People, that contributed nothing to the Happiness of the Commonwealth; nay, as *destructive* and *pernicious* to human Society, and as the procuring cause of all those Mischiefs and Calamities that befel the World. In answer to the first, their

Arnob. adv. Gent. l. 2. prop. fin. Lactant. l. 5. de Justit. c. 22.

Part I. their being *uſeleſs* as to the common Good, hear what *Tertullian* ſays in the Caſe: How can this be *(ſays he)* when we live amongſt you, have the ſame
Ap. c. 42. p. 33. *Diet*, *Habit*, *Manner*, and *Way* of Life? We are no *Brachmans* or *Indian Gymnoſophiſts*, who live in Woods, and baniſh themſelves from all civil Life: We are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore deſpiſe none of his Creatures, tho careful to uſe them with Temperance and Sobriety; wherefore we live not in the World without the uſe of your *Markets*, *Shambles*, *Bathes*, *Taverns*, *Shops*, *Stables*, *your Marts*, and other ways of human Commerce; we *go to Sea* with you, *bear Arms*, *till and improve the Ground*, uſe *Merchandize*; we undergo *Trades* amongſt you, and expoſe our *Works* to your uſe: and how then we can ſeem *unſerviceable* to your Affairs, with which and by which
Ib. c. 43. we live, I ſee not. Certainly *(ſays he)* if any have cauſe truly to complain of our being unprofitable, they are *Bawds*, *Panders*, *Pimps*, *Hectors and Ruffians*, *Sellers of Poiſon*, *Magicians*, *Soothſayers*, *Wizards* and *Aſtrologers*; and to be *unſerviceable* to theſe, is the greateſt *ſerviceableneſs*. But beſides this, they pleaded for themſelves, that their Religion was highly *beneficial* to the World, and in its own nature contributed to the Peace and Happineſs of Mankind. It cannot be deny'd, but that ſome of the *Primitive Chriſtians* were ſhy of engaging in *Wars*, and not very forward to undergo publick Places of *Authority* and *Power*; but (beſides that this was only the *Opinion* of ſome *private Perſons*, and not the common and current Practice or Determination of the *Church)* it aroſe partly from ſome miſtaken Paſſages in the *Goſpel*, turning *Evangelical Counſels* into *poſitive Precepts*; but principally becauſe ſuch *Offices* and Employments were uſually clogg'd with ſuch Circumſtances and Conditions, as obliged them

to

to some things repugnant to the Christian Law: Otherwise where they could do it, without offering Violence to their Religion and their Conscience, they shunn'd it not, but frequently bore *Arms*, and discharg'd such Publick Offices as were committed to them; as cannot be unknown to any that are never so little vers'd in the *History* of the first Ages of the *Church*. Never were there better, more faithful and resolute *Soldiers*, more obedient to the Orders of their Commanders, more ready to attempt the most hazardous Enterprizes, never boggling at any thing which they could do without Sin. Of which, amongst many others, I shall instance only in that of the *Thebæan Legion*, who being commanded upon a bloody and unlawful Butchery, to destroy and cut off the *Christians*, their Brethren, meekly return'd this answer to the Heathen Emperor *Maximianus*, under whom they serv'd: We offer our *hands* against any Enemy, but count it unlawful to embrue them in the Blood of the *Innocent:* Our Swords know how to strike a *Rebel* or an Enemy, but not to wound those who are *Citizens and Guiltless*; we remember that we took up Arms for, not against Friends and Fellow-Citizens: We have always fought for Justice and Piety; and for the Safety of the Innocent; these have been hitherto the Price of those dangers that we have run upon; we have fought for Fidelity, which how shall we be able to keep to *you*, if we do not first keep it to *our God?* So far were the Christians of those times from refusing to engage in the service of their Prince. Nay, those of them who were so bound up by their private Sentiments, as not to think it lawful, yet reckoned they otherwise made *equivalent* compensation. Thus when *Celsus* press'd the Christians to undergo publick Offices, and to help the Emperors in their Wars; *Origen* answers, that they did so, though

Chap. 3.

Martyrol. Adonis ad X Kalend. Octob.

Adv. Cels. l. 8. p. 426, 427.

by

Part I. by a *divine*, not *human* Help, by praying for their Persons, and their Prosperity and Success: Above all Men *(says he)* we fight for the Emperor, while we train our selves in Exercises of Piety, and contend by Prayers for him. But besides these, there were several other Instances which the Christians pleaded to vindicate themselves from being *unserviceable* to the good of Mankind, amongst which I shall at present take notice only of these two.

First, That they really sought to reclaim Men from *Vice* and *Sin*, to a good and vertuous Life; by which means (besides that they provided for Mens highest and nearest *Interest*, the Interest of their Souls, and their eternal Happiness in another Life) they greatly consulted the Peace and Welfare of the Places where they lived; for vicious and wicked Men are the *Pests* and *Plagues* of human Society, that taint and infect others by their bad Examples or Persuasions, and intail Vengeance upon the Places of their Residence; whilst good Men engage the Favour and Blessing of Heaven, and both by their Counsels and Examples bring over others to Sobriety and Vertue, whereby they establish and strengthen the Foundations of Government, and the Happiness of Civil Life. And none so eminent for this as the Christians of old; this is the great *triumphant* Argument, wherewith *Origen* at every turn, exalts the honour of *Christianity*: This *(says he)* we find in the multitudes of those that believe, who are delivered from that sink of Vices, wherein before they were wont to wallow: Enquire into the Lives of some of us, compare our former and our present Course, and you'll find in what Filthiness and Impieties they tumbled, before they entertained the *Christian Doctrine*; but since the time that they entred into it, how gentle and moderate, how grave and constant are they become, and some so inflam'd with the love of Purity

Adv. Cels. lib. 1. *p.* 9.

Ib. p. 21.

Ib. p. 53.

Purity, that they forbear even what lawfully they might enjoy, How largely are the Churches of God, founded by *Christ*, spread over all Nations, consisting of such as are converted from innumerable evil ways to a better Mind! And elsewhere vindicating the Doctrine of *Christ*, from the mischievous Cavils of his Adversary, he tells us, how 'twas impossible that could be pestilent and hurtful, which had converted so many from their Vices and Debaucheries, to a Course most agreeable to Nature and Reason, and to a Life of Temperance and all other Vertues: And the same he urges frequently in other places, and what greater Kindness and Benefit could be done to Men? Does *Celsus* call upon us *(says he)* to bear Offices for the good of our Country; let him know that the Country is much more beholden to Christians than to the rest of Men, while they teach Men Piety towards God, the tutelar Guardian of the Country, and shew them the way to that heavenly City that is above, which they that live well may attain to, tho here they dwell in the smallest City in the World. Nor do the Christians thus employ themselves, because they shun the publick Offices of the Civil Life; but only reserve themselves for the more divine and necessary Services of the Church, in order to the Good and Happiness of Men: for this they think very just and reasonable, that they should take care of all Men; of them of their own Party, that they may every day make them better; of others, that they may draw them to the belief and practice of Piety and Religion, that so worshipping God in Truth, and doing what they can to instruct others, they may be united to the great God, and to his blessed Son, who is the Wisdom, Truth, and Righteousness, and by whom it is that every one is converted to a pious and a religious Life.

Chap. 3.

Lib. 2. *p.* 78.

* *Theo-*

Part I.

*Theodoret discourſing againſt the *Gentiles*, of the Excellency of the Laws of *Chriſt*, above any that were given by the beſt Philoſophers or wiſeſt Men amongſt the Heathens, gives them Inſtances of whole Nations whom Chriſtianity had brought off from the moſt brutiſh and ſavage Manners: He tells them of the *Perſians*, who by the Laws given them by *Zarada*, lived in inceſtuous mixtures with their own *Mothers*, *Siſters*, and *Daughters*, looking upon it as a lawful and warrantable Practice; till entertaining *Chriſtianity*, they threw off thoſe abominable Laws, and ſubmitted to that Temperance and Chaſtity which the Goſpel requires of us. And whereas before they were wont to caſt out the Bodies of their dead to be devoured by Beaſts and Birds of Prey; ſince they embraced the *Chriſtian* Religion, they abſtained from that piece of Inhumanity, and decently committed them to the Earth; from which they could not be reſtrained, either by the Laws of their Country, or the Bitterneſs of thoſe Torments which they underwent. The *Maſſagetes*, who thought it the moſt miſerable thing in the World to *die* any other than a violent Death, and therefore made a Law, that all Perſons arrived to old Age ſhould be offered in Sacrifice and eaten; no ſooner ſubmitted to *Chriſtianity*, but abhorred thoſe barbarous and abominable Cuſtoms. The *Tibarens*, who uſed to throw aged Perſons down the ſteepeſt Rocks; left it off, upon their embracing of the *Goſpel*. Upon the ſame account the *Hyrcani* and the *Caſpians* reformed their Manners; who were formerly wont to keep Dogs on purpoſe to devour the Bodies of the Dead. Nor did the *Scythians* any longer, together with their Dead, bury thoſe alive, who had been their neareſt Friends and Kindred. So great a change *(ſays my Author)* did the Laws of *Chriſt* make in the Manners of Men, and ſo eaſily were the moſt barba-

*De curan. Græc. affectib. Serm. 9. de Leg. p. 128.

barbarous Nations perſuaded to entertain them : a thing which *Plato*, tho the beſt of all Philoſophers, could never effect amongſt the *Athenians*, his own Fellow-Citizens, who could never induce them to govern the Commonwealth according to thoſe Laws and Inſtitutions which he had preſcribed them. Chap. 3.

Nay, where the Goſpel did not produce this Effect to reclaim Men from their Vices and Vanities, and to bring them over to the Religion of the crucified *Saviour*; yet had it this excellent *Influence* upon the World, that it generally taught them better Leſſons, refin'd their Underſtandings, and filled their Minds with more uſeful and practical Notions about Religion, than they had before. To which purpoſe it's mainly obſervable, that thoſe *Philoſophers* who lived in the time of *Chriſtianity*, after the Goſpel publickly appeared in the World, wrote in a much more *divine Strain*, entertained more honourable and worthy Sentiments about God and Religion, and the Duties of Men in their ſeveral Capacities, than thoſe of their Sect that went before them. Of which I conceive no account can be given ſo ſatisfactory as this, that the *Genius* and Spirit of the Goſpel began then to fly abroad, and to breathe in a free Air, and ſo could not but leave ſome Tincture and Savour upon the Spirits of Men, tho its moſt inveterate Enemies. Beſides, that many of them did more nearly converſe with the Writings of *Chriſtianity*, which they read either out of *Curioſity*, or with a *Deſign* to confute and anſwer them. This doubtleſs ſharpned the Edge of their Underſtandings, and furniſhed them with better Notions, more uſeful Precepts and Rules of Life, than are to be met with in any of the old Philoſophers : witneſs thoſe excellent and uncommon ſtrains of Piety that run thorow the Writings of *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Antoninus*, *Arrian*, *Plutarch*, *Hierocles*, *Plotinus*, and the reſt that

Μετὰ δὴ τὴν σωτηρίου ἡμῶν ἐπιφάνειαν ἔτοι, ἡνώμωνται τῇ Χριστιανικῇ θεολογίᾳ πολλὰ τοῖς οἰκείοις ἀνέμιξαν λόγοις. *Theod. de Cur. Græc. Aff. Serm. 2. de princip. p. 33.*

Part I. that lived in those first Ages of the Gospel; of which I could give considerable Instances, were it necessary to my purpose. I shall only, as a *Specimen*, set down that *Prayer* wherewith *Simplicius* (Enemy enough to *Christianity*) concludes his Comment upon *Epictetus*; and thus he makes his address to God:

Pag. 331. Ἱκετεύω σε, Δέσποτα, ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἡγεμὼν τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγου, ὑπομνησθῆναι μὲν ἡμᾶς τῆς ἑαυτῶν εὐγλωττείας ἧς ἠξίωσας ἡμᾶς, ἵνα δὲ καὶ συμπεράναι δὲ ὡς αὐτοκινήτοις ἡμῖν ποδός τε κάθαρσιν τοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων παθῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ὑπέχειν καὶ ἄρχειν αὐτῶν, καὶ ὡς ἐργάνοις κεχρῆσθαι καὶ τῷ προσήκοντα τρόπον. Καὶ πρὸς διόρθωσιν ἀκριβῆ τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγου καὶ ἕνωσιν αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὰ ὄντως ὄντα διὰ τοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας φωτός. Καὶ τὸ τρίτον, τὸν σωτῆρα ἱκετεύω, ἀφελεῖν τελέως τοῦ ἀχλὺν τοῦ ψυχικῶν ἡμῶν ὀμμάτων, Ὄφρα γνώσομαι δ' (κατὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον) ἠμὲν θεὸν, ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα.

I *Beseech thee, O Lord, thou that art the Father and Guide of our rational Powers, grant that we may be mindful of those Noble and Generous Natures with which thou hast invested us; and assist us, that as Persons endued with self-moving Principles, we may cleanse our selves from all bodily and brutish Passions; that we may subdue and govern them, and in a due and decent manner use them, only as Organs and Instruments. Help us through the Light of the Truth, accurately to correct our Reason, and unite it to those things that have a real Existence. And in the third place, I beseech my Saviour, that he would perfectly dispel the Mist that is before the Eyes of our Minds, that, according to that of the Poet, we may rightly understand what belongs either to God or Man.*

Besides the *matter* of this Prayer, which is very *sublime* and *spiritual*, the *manner* of its composure is con-

considerable, consisting of *three parts*, and those addressed as it were to *three Persons*, answerable to those in the *blessed Trinity*, the *Lord* (or *Father*) the *Saviour* (or *Christ*) and the *Light of Truth* (which even in Scripture is a common *Periphrasis* of the *Holy Spirit:*) whether he intended this, I will not say; sure I am, it looks very like it. But enough of this. Chap. 3.

Secondly, That they ordinarily wrought such *Miracles* as were incomparably *beneficial* to the World, in curing *Diseases*, raising the *Dead*, and rescuing possessed Persons from the mercileſs Rage and Cruelty of the *Devil:* We may observe that in those *primitive* Times, there were innumerable multitudes of possessed persons, beyond what were in the Ages either before or since; the Divine Providence doubtless permitting it to be so, that by this means there might be a fairer occasion of commending *Christianity* to the World; and there is nothing which we more commonly meet with in the Writings of the antient Fathers, than Testimonies concerning their triumphant power over *evil Spirits*. *Justin Martyr* discoursing of the end of *Christ's* coming into the World, for the Salvation of Men, and the Subversion of Devils, tells the *Senate*; That these things things are so, you may know by what is done before your eyes, for many that were possessed by Devils, throughout the whole World, and even in *this City* of yours, whom all your *Inchanters*, *Sorcerers*, and *Conjurers* were not able to cure, many of us *Christians* adjuring them by the name of *Jesus Christ*, who was *crucified* under *Pontius Pilate*, have perfectly cured, and do still cure, disarming and driving out of Men those *Dæmons* that had seized upon them: and the same he affirms more than once and again in his discourse with *Trypho* the *Jew*. *Irenæus* arguing against the Hereticks, tells us, that the true Disciples of Christ did in his Name many strange things for the good of others,

Apol. 1. *p.* 45.

Adv. Hæres. lib. 2. *c.* 57. *p.* 218.

Part I. others, according as every one had received his Gift; some so signally expelling Devils, that those out of whom they were cast came over to the Faith; others foretelling future Events; others curing Men of the most grievous Distempers, by putting their Hands upon them, and restoring them to their former Health: Many that have been raised from the dead, and afterwards lived many years amongst us. And indeed, innumerable (says he) are the Gifts which God has every where bestowed upon his Church, whereby, in the Name of the crucified *Jesus*, many and great Miracles are daily done, to the great advantage of the World. *Tertullian* appeals to the *Ad Scap. c.* 2. *p.* 69. Heathens, as a thing commonly known amongst them, that they daily restrained the *power of Devils*, and cast them out of Men. And he tells *Scapula* *Ib. c.* 4. *p.* 71 the *President*, that he might be satisfied of this from his own *Records*, and those very Advocates who had themselves reaped this benefit from *Christians*: as for instance, a certain *Notary*, and the Kinsman and Child of another; besides divers other Persons of Note and Quality (not to speak of the meaner sort) who had been recovered either from Devils or from desperate Diseases. Nay, *Severus* the Father of *Antoninus* having been cured by being anointed with Oil by *Proculus* a Christian, he kept him in his Palace till his Death; whom *Antoninus* knew well, having been himself nursed by a *Christian*. And in his *Apology* he challenges the Heathens to produce any possessed Person before the Publick Tribunals, and the Evil Spirit being commanded by any *Christian* shall then as truly confess himself to *Apol. c.* 37. *p.* 30. be a *Devil*, as at other times he falsly boasts himself to be a *God*. And elsewhere putting the case that the *Christians* should agree to retire out of the *Roman* Empire, he asks them what Protection they would then have left against the secret and invisible

ble Attempts of Devils, who made such havock both of their Souls and Bodies, whom the Christians so freely expelled and drove out? That it would be a sufficient piece of Revenge, that hereby they should leave them open to the uncontroulable Possessions of those Evil Spirits. 'Twere endless to produce all the Testimonies of this nature, that might be fetch'd from *Origen*, *Minutius Fælix*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, and all the old Apologists for the Christian Religion, (some whereof I have briefly *noted* in the *Margin)* who constantly pleaded this as a mighty and uncontroulable Argument of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion, and of their great Usefulness to Mankind. Nay, this Miraculous Power continued in the Church some considerable time after *Constantine* and the World was become *Christian*, as appears from St. *Basil*, *Nazianzen*, and others: And though I do not give heed to all the Miracles which are reported by St. *Hierom* in the Lives of *Hilarion*, *Paulus*, and some others; or by *Palladius* in his *Historia Lausiaca*; yet doubtless many of them were very true and real: God withdrawing this Extraordinary Power, as Christianity gained faster footing in the World, and leaving the Church to those standing Methods by which it was to be managed and governed to the end of the World. Chap. 3.

Orig. contr. C. l. 1. p. 5, 7, 53. l. 3. p. 124. l. 7. p. 334, 376. Cypr. ep. ad. Donat. p. 3. ad Demetrian. p. 201, 206. Mir. Fæl. p. 23. Arnob. adv. gent. l. 1. p. 13. Lact. de error. l. 2. c. 15. p. 220. Euseb. demonstr. Evang. l. 3. p. 132. Naz. Or. 1. Apol. p. 35. Aug. de C. D. l. 22. c. 8. p. 1339. Greg. Nyss. Or. in suam ordinat. tom. 1. p. 876. Athanas. de. incarn. ver. p. 74. Ap. c. 37. p. 30. Ib. c. 1. p. 2.

And yet notwithstanding the Case was thus plain and evident, how much the World was beholden to *Christians*; yet were they looked upon as the *Pests* of Human Society, counted and called the *common Enemies of Mankind*, as *Tertullian* complains; that they were the Causes of all Publick Calamities, and that for their sakes it was, that Vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the *Roman Empire*. This was the common Out-cry: If the *City* be besieged, (says *Tertullian*) if any thing happen ill in the *Fields*, in the *Garisons*, in the *Islands*, presently they cry

Part I. out, *'Tis because of the Christians.* They conspire the Ruin of good Men, and thirst after the Blood of the Innocent; patronizing their Hatred with this vain pretence, That the *Christians* are the Cause of all publick Misfortunes and Calamities. If *Tiber* overflow the Walls, if the *Nile* do not (as 'tis wont) *overflow* the Fields, if the *Heaven* do not keep its accumstomed Course, if an *Earthquake* happen, if a *Famine*, or a *Plague*; presently the Cry is, *Away with the Christians to the Lions.* Thus *Demetrian* the *Proconsul* of *Africk* objected to St. *Cyprian*, that they might thank the *Christians*, that Wars did oftner arise, that Plagues and Famines did rage so much, and that immoderate and excessive Rains hindred the kindly Seasons of the Year. The same *Arnobius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to object at every turn, and to conclude it as sure as if it had been dictated by an *Oracle*, that since the *Christians* appeared in the World, the World had been well-nigh undone, Mankind has been over-run with infinite kinds of Evils; and the very Gods themselves had withdrawn that solemn Care and Providence, wherewith they were wont to superintend Human Affairs. Nay, so hot and common was this Charge amongst the *Pagans*, that when the *Goths* and *Vandales* broke in upon the *Roman Empire*, St. *Augustine* was forced to write those *excellent* Books *De Civit. Dei*, purposely to stop the Mouth of this Objection; as upon the same account and at his request, *Orosius* wrote his Seven Books of History against the *Pagans.* Omitting some of the *Answers* given by the Fathers, (as being probably less solid, and not so proper in this Case) such as, That 'twas no wonder if Miseries happened, and things grew worse in this *old age* of Time, the World daily growing more feeble and decrepit; and that these things had been *foretold by God*, and therefore must necessarily come to pass;

Ib. c. 40. p. 32.

Cyp. ad. Demetr. p. 197.

Arnob. Adv. gent. l. 1. p. 1

Aid. Retractat. l. 2. c. 43. tom. 1. p. 52. P. Oros. Præf. ad Lib. Hist. ad D. Aug.

paſs; two Arguments largely and ſtrongly pleaded by St. *Cyprian*, that thoſe Evils were properly reſolvable into natural Cauſes; and that every thing is not preſently *evil*, becauſe it croſſes our Eaſe and Intereſt, as *Arnobius* anſwers. Paſſing by theſe, I ſhall take notice only of two things which the *Chriſtians* pleaded in this Caſe. Chap. 3. *Ad Demet.* p. 198, 199. *Arnob. ut ſupra* p. 4.

Firſt, That the *Gentiles* ſhould do very well to ſeek the *true Cauſes* of theſe things nearer home, and to enquire whether 'twas not for their own ſakes, that the Divine Providence was thus offended with them, there being very juſt Reaſons to think ſo. *Tertullian* points them to ſuch Cauſes as theſe: Firſt, their horrible *affronting* their *Natural Notions* of God, that *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh Heart was darkned, and they changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible God into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beaſts, and creeping things*; as St. *Paul* had told them long before. And th t therefore 'twas reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that Gou was more angry with them, who inſtead of him, worſhipped pieces of *Wood* and *Statues*, or at beſt *Genii* and Devils, than with thoſe who ſincerely paid their Adorations to him alone. Secondly, paſſing by God the great Maſter of all Goodneſs and Innocence, and the ſevere Revenger of all Impiety, they tumble themſelves in all manner of Vice and Wickedneſs; and what wonder if the Divine Juſtice followed cloſe at their heels? You are angry (ſays *Cyprian*) that God is angry, as if in living *ill* you deſerved *well*, and as if all that has happened to you were not *leſs* and *lighter* than your Sins. And thou *Demetrian*, who art a Judg of *others*, be in this a Judg of thy *ſelf*, inſpect the Retirements of thy Conſcience, and behold thy ſelf now, who ſhalt one day be ſeen naked *Ap.* c. 40. p. 33. *Rom.* 1. 21, 23, 23. *Ap.* c. 41. *vid. Arnob.* l. 1. p. 6, 7. *Ut ſupra* p. 199, 200.

Part I. ked by all; and thou wilt find thy ſelf enſlaved and led captive by ſome Sins or other: and why then ſhould thou wonder that the Flames of the Divine Anger ſhould riſe higher, when the Sins of Men do daily adminiſter more Fuel to it? An Anſwer which he there proſecutes to very excellent purpoſe. Thirdly, their prodigious Unthankfulneſs to God for all the former Bleſſings they had received from him. So far as they were *ingrateful*, they were highly *guilty*, and God could not but puniſh them. Had they ſought him, whom in part they could not but know, and been obſervant of him, they would in this caſe have found him a much more propitious than an angry Deity, as *Tertullian* tells them. Upon theſe and ſuch like accounts, they might well conclude it was, that the Vengeance of God did preſs ſo hard upon them, and that therefore they had no true reaſon to lay the Fault at any other door but their own.

Secondly, As to the thing it ſelf, as 'twas charged upon them, they point-blank denied it to be true; and that for two Reaſons eſpecially.

Firſt, Becauſe the World had been ſadly and frequently *peſtered* with ſuch *Evils* and *Miſeries* long before the *Chriſtian Religion* appeared in it. I pray (ſays *Tertullian*) what Miſeries did overwhelm all the World, and even *Rome* it ſelf, before the times of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* before the coming of *Chriſt?* Have we not read of *Hierapolis*, and the Iſlands of *Delos*, and *Rhodes*, and *Cos*, deſtroyed with many thouſands of Men? Does not *Plato* ſpeak of the greateſt part of *Aſia* and *Africk ſwallowed up* by the *Atlantick* Sea? An Earthquake drank up the *Corinthian* Sea, and the Force of the *Ocean* rent off *Sicilia* from *Italy*. Not to ask where were the *Chriſtians*, the great Contemners of your Gods; but where were *your Gods* themſelves when the Flood over-ran the World? *Paleſtine* had not yet received the *Jewiſh* Nation out of *Egypt*,

Ap. c. 40. *p.* 32.

Egypt, much less had the *Christians* sat down there when *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the adjacent Parts, were burnt up by a Shower of *Fire* and *Brimstone*, of which the Country smells to this Day. Nor could *Tuscia* and *Campania* complain of the *Christians*, when a Fire from Heaven destroyed the *Vulsinii* and the *Pompii*. None as yet worshipped the True God at *Rome*, when *Hannibal* at *Cannæ* made such a Slaughter of the *Romans*, that the very *Rings* that he took (*which were the Honourable Badges of none but* Roman *Knights*) were measured by the *Bushel*. They were all your Gods that then had the general Worship, when the *Gauls* took the *Capitol* it self. So smartly does that *grave* Man retort their own Arguments upon themselves. *Arnobius* fully and elegantly pursues this, that *in this respect the former Times were no better than these*, which they so much complained of, and bids them run over the *Annals* and *Records* that were written in all Languages, and they would find, that all Nations had frequently had their common Miseries and Devastations. The clearing of which was likewise the great design *Orosius* proposed to himself, in drawing down the History of the World through all the Ages and Generations of it.

Chap. 3.

Lib. 1. *p.* 2, 3.

Præfat. ut supra p. 2.

Secondly, Because since the coming of *Christianity*, the World had been in a *better* and more *prosperous State* than it was before; especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any Favour and Encouragement. The reason of it *Tertullian* gives: Although we should compare present with former Miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since God sent *Christians* into the World; for since then Innocency has *ballanced* the Iniquities of the Age, and there have been many who have *interceeded* with Heaven. The *Author of the Questions* and *Answers* in *Justin Martyr* (for that it was not *Justin* himself, I think

*Apol. c.*40. *p.* 33.

*Quæst.*126. *p.* 476.

Part. I. think no Man can doubt that reads him, the Man betraying himself openly enough to have lived in the Times of *prevailing Christianity*) putting this Question, Whether *Paganism* was not the better Religion, forasmuch as under it there was great Prosperity and Abundance; whereas 'twas quite otherwise since *Christianity* came in fashion? he answers among other things, That (besides that Plenty was no Argument of the Goodness of any Religion, Christians being to be judged of rather by the *Holiness* than the *Prosperity* of their Religion) there was so much the more Abundance in these Times of *Christianity*, by how much there were fewer Wars, than was while *Paganism* governed the World. Never were Wars more successfully managed, never was Prosperity more triumphant, than when Christians met with kind Entertainment. *Melito*, Bishop of *Sardis*, in an *Oration* which he presented to the Emperour *M. Antoninus* in behalf of the Christians (part whereof is yet extant in *Eusebius*) tells him that *Christianity* commencing under the Reign of *Augustus*, was a good *Omen* of the Prosperity of the Empire, and that ever since, the *Majesty* of the *Roman Empire* had increased. Of whom he being the Heir and Successor, he could not better assure it to himself and his Son, than by protecting that Religion that had been born and bred up together with the Empire, and for which his Ancestors amongst other Religions had had an Esteem and Honour. That there could be no better Argument that this Religion contributed to the Happiness of the Empire, (with which it began and had grown up) than that since the Reign of *Augustus* no Misfortune, but on the contrary (according to all Mens Wishes) every thing had happened to be Magnificent and Prosperous. Hence * *Eusebius* notes once and again, that the Affairs of the Empire commonly flourished while Christianity was protected,

Euseb. Ec. Hist. l. 4. c. 26. p. 148.

* *Vid. lib. l. 7. c. 1. l. 8. c. 13. De Martyr. Palæst. c. 3. p. 322. Ad. Demet. p. 200.*

protected, but when that was perſecuted, things began to go to rack, and their antient Peace and Proſperity could not be retrieved, till Peace and Tranquillity was reſtored to the Chriſtians. Therefore *Cyprian* tells the *Proconſul*, that their Cruelty to the Chriſtians was one of thoſe crying Sins that had provoked God to inflict ſo many heavy Miſeries upon them, not only refuſing to worſhip God themſelves, but unjuſtly perſecuted thoſe innocent Perſons that did, with all the Methods of Rage and Fierceneſs. So little hand had the Chriſtians in entailing Vengeance upon the World, that their Enemies rather wilfully pulled it down upon their own Heads. Chap. 4.

CHAP. IV.

The Charges brought againſt them reſpecting their Life and Manners.

The Primitive Chriſtians accuſed of the groſſeſt Sins, Sacrilege, Sedition, Treaſon, Inceſt, Murder, &c. The particular Conſideration of theſe referred to their proper places. What they offered in the general, for their Vindication, conſidered. They openly aſſerted their Innocency, and appealed to the known Piety of their Lives. None accounted Chriſtians, however eminent in Profeſſion, unleſs their Lives anſwerable. Their abſtaining from Appearance of Evil, or doing any thing that ſymbolized with the idolatrous Rites of the Heathens. Their being willing to be brought to the ſtricteſt Trial,

Trial, and to be ſeverely puniſhed, if found guilty of thoſe Crimes. Their Complaints of being (generally) condemned merely for bearing the Name of Chriſtians. They greatly gloried in that Title. This Name prohibited by Julian, *and Chriſtians commanded in ſcorn to be called* Galileans. *The Chriſtians appealed for their Vindication to the Conſciences of their impartial Enemies, and by them acquitted. The Teſtimonies of* Pliny, Ser. Granianus, Antonius Pius, M. Antoninus, Trypho *the* Jew, *and* Apollo's *Oracle, to this purpoſe. The Excellency of Chriſtians, if compared with the beſt of Heathens. All ſuch diſowned for Chriſtians, as did not exactly conform to the Rule and Diſcipline of Chriſtianity.*

ALL the Attempts that had been hitherto made againſt the Honour and Reputation of Chriſtians, ſeemed but like the *firſt Skirmiſhings* of an Army, in reſpect of the main *Battalia* that was yet behind, the Charge that was made againſt their **Moral Carriage** *and Behaviour*; and here they were accuſed at every turn of no leſs than *Sacrilege*, *Sedition*, and *High Treaſon*; of *Inceſt* and *promiſcuous Mixtures*; of *Murder*, and *eating the Fleſh of Infants* at their Sacramental Feaſts. Theſe were ſad and horrid Crimes, and (had they been true) would juſtly have made Chriſtianity ſtink in the Noſtrils of all ſober and conſidering Men; but they were as *falſe* as they were *black* and *helliſh*. The particular Anſwers to theſe Charges (together with ſome things relating to matters of Worſhip) ſhall be conſidered hereafter, according as they fall in their

their more proper places: I shall only at present take notice of the general Vindication which the Christians made of themselves, from these Indictments that were brought in against them; and the Sum of what they pleaded, lies especially in these three things. Chap. 5.

First, They did openly assert and maintain their *Innocency*, and shew by their *Lives* as well as their *Apologies*, that they were Men of quite another Make and Temper, than their Enemies did generally represent them. Their Religion and way of Life was admired by all. Who (says St. *Clement* to the *Corinthians*) did ever dwell amongst you, that did not approve of your excellent and unshaken Faith? that did not wonder at your sober and moderate Piety in Christ? You were forward to every good Work, adorn'd with a most vertuous and venerable Conversation; doing all things in the Fear of God, and having his Laws and Commands written upon the Tables of your Hearts. They placed Religion then not in *talking finely*, but in *living well*. Amongst us (says *Athenagoras*) the meanest and most mechanick Persons, and old Women, altho not able to *discourse* and *dispute* for the Usefulness of their Profession, do yet demonstrate it in their Lives and Actions: They don't indeed critically weigh their *Words*, and recite elegant *Orations*, but they manifest *honest* and *vertuous* Actions; while being buffeted, they strike not again; nor sue them at Law, that spoil and plunder them; *Liberally give to them that ask, and love their Neighbours as themselves*. And this we do, because we are assured that there is a God that super-intends human Affairs, who made both us and the whole World: And because we must give to him an account of all the Transactions of our Lives; therefore we chuse the most moderate, humane, and benign, and (to many) the

Clem. ep. ad Corinth. p. 2, 4.

Leg. pro Christ. p. 12.

Part I. the most contemptible Course of Life; for we reckon that no Evil in this Life can be so great, tho we should be called to lay down our Lives, which ought to be esteemed little and of no value in comparison of that Happiness which we hereafter look for from the great Judg of the World, promised to those who are of an humble, benign, and moderate Conversation. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* gives us this short account of them: As the fairest Possession, we give our selves to God, entirely loving him, and reckoning this the great Business of our Lives. No Man is with us a *Christian*, or accounted truly rich, temperate, and generous, but he that is pious and religious; nor does any further bear the Image of God, than he speaks and believes what is just and holy. *So that this in short is the State of us who follow God:* Such as are our *Desires*, such are our *Discourses*; such as are our *Discourses*, such are our *Actions*; such as are our *Actions*, such is our *Life*: So universally good is the whole Life of *Christians*. Certainly none were ever greater Enemies to a naked Profession, and the covering a bad Life under the Title of *Christianity*. Do any live otherwise than *Christ* hath commanded? 'tis a most certain Argument they are no *Christians*, tho with their Tongues they never so smoothly profess the Christian Doctrine; for 'tis not *mere Professors*, but those who live according to their Profession, that shall be saved, as *Justin Martyr* declares before the *Emperors*. Let no Man (says *Basil*) impose upon himself with inconsiderate Words, saying, Tho I be a *Sinner*, yet I am a *Christian*, and I hope that Title will be my Shelter. But hearken, *Sinner*, all wicked Men shall be bundled up together, and in the great Day of the Divine Vengeance shall be indifferently thrown into those mercileſs and devouring Flames.

Admonit. 2 *ad genu. p.* 76.

Ap. 2. *p.* 63. *Comment. in c.* 1. *Esa. to.* 2. *p.* 28.

Nay,

Nay, so careful were they to avoid all Sin, that they stood at a wide distance from any thing that (tho lawful in it self) yet seemed to carry an *ill colour* with it. This, *Origen* tells *Celsus*, was the reason why they refused to do any honour to an Image, least thereby they should give occasion to others to think that they ascribed Divinity to them. For this reason they shunned all *Community* with the Rites and Customs of the Heathens; *abstaining from things strangled*, or that had been *offered to Idols*, from frequenting the *publick Baths*, or going to the *Sights* and *Shows*, because they seemed to owe their Original to *Idolatry*, and were the occasion of many gross Enormities. They refused to wear *Crowns of Lawrel*, least they should seem to patronize the Custom of the *Gentiles*, who were wont to do so in their sacred and solemn Rites; as appeared eminently in the Solemnities of the Emperors *Severus* and *Caracalla*: When the *Tribune* delivered the *Donative* to the Soldiers, and all came to receive it with Crowns upon their *Heads*, one of them brought his in his Hand, and being demanded the Reason, answered that he was a Christian, and could not do it. Which was the occasion of *Tertullian*'s Book *De corona Militis*, wherein he sets himself to defend it. Chap. 4.

Lib. 7. *p.* 375.

Secondly, they were willing to put themselves upon the *strictest* Trial, and to undergo the *severest* Penalties, if found guilty of those Crimes that were charged upon them. So their *Apologist* bespeaks the *Emperors*: We beseech you (says he) that those things that are charged upon the *Christians* may be enquired into, and if they be found to be so, let them have their deserved Punishment; nay, let them be more severely punished than other Men: but if not guilty, then 'tis not reasonable that innocent Persons should suffer merely upon Report and Clamour. And speaking of those that only

Just. Mart. Ap. 2. *p.* 54

Part I. only took Sanctuary at the Name of *Christians*, he adds, that those who lived not according to the Laws of *Christ*, and were only called by his Name, they begged of them that such might be punished.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 3. To the same purpose, *Athenagoras*, in his *Embassy*, taking notice how their Enemies laid wait for their Lives and Fortunes, loaded them with heaps of Reproaches, charging 'em with things that never so much as entered into their Minds, and of which their Accusers themselves were most guilty, he makes this Offer; Let but any of us be convict of any Crime either small or great, and we refuse not to be punished, nay, are ready to undergo the most cruel and heavy Penalty: But if we be only accused for our Name (and to this day all our Accusations are but the Figments of obscure and uncertain *Fame*, no Christian having ever been convict of any Fault) then we hope it will become such *wise, gracious, and mighty* Princes as you are, to make such Laws as may secure us from those Wrongs and Injuries. But alas! so clear was their Innocency, that their bittерest Adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open Trial. If you be so certain that we are guil-

Ap. c. 2. p. 2. ty (says *Tertullian* to the Heathens) why then are we not treated in the same nature with all *Malefactors*, who have leave both by themselves and their *Advocates* to defend their Innocency, to answer and put in Pleas; it being unlawful to condemn any before they be heard, and have liberty to defend themselves? Whereas Christians only are not permitted to speak any thing that might clear their Cause, maintain the Truth, and make the Judg able to pronounce righteous Sentence. 'Tis enough to justify the publick *Odium*, if we do but confess our selves *Christians*, without ever examining of the Crime; contrary to the manner of procedure against all other Delinquents, whom 'tis not enough barely to charge to be *Murderers*,

rers, *Sacrilegious*, or *Inceſtuous*, or *Enemies* to the *Publick* (the *Titles* you are pleaſed to beſtow upon us) unleſs they alſo take the Quality of the Fact, the Place, Manner, Time, Partners, and Acceſſories under Examination. But no ſuch favour is ſhewn to us, but we are condemn'd without any *Inquiſition* paſs'd upon us. And good reaſon there was that they ſhould take this courſe, ſeeing they could really find nothing to condemn them for, but for being *Chriſtians*. This one would think ſtrange, eſpecially amongſt a People ſo renowned for *Juſtice* and *Equity* as the *Romans* were, and yet in theſe times nothing more ordinary. Therefore when *Urbicius*, the *Prefect of Rome*, had condemned *Ptolemæus* merely upon his confeſſing himſelf a Chriſtian, one *Lucius* that ſtood by cryed out, *What ſtrange Courſe is this! What infamous Miſdemeanour is this Man guilty of, that when he's no Adulterer, Fornicator, no Murderer, no Thief nor Robber, thou ſhouldeſt puniſh him only becauſe he calls himſelf a Chriſtian? Certainly*, Urbicius, *ſuch Juſtice as this does not become the Piety of the Emperor, or the Philoſophy of* Cæſar *his Son, or the Sacred and Venerable Senate*, And *Tertullian* tells us, 'twas the common Accuſation they had in their Mouths; *Such or ſuch a one is a good Man, only he is a Chriſtian*; or *I wonder at ſuch a one, a wiſe Man, but lately turned Chriſtian*. So *Cyprian*, I remember, reduces his Adverſary to this unavoidable *Dilemma*; Chuſe one of theſe two things, To be a Chriſtian either is a Fault, or 'tis not; if it be a *Fault*, why doſt thou not kill every one that confeſſes it? if it *be not*, why doſt thou perſecute them that are innocent? Hence we find nothing more common in the old *Apologiſts*, than Complaints concerning the Unreaſonableneſs of being accuſed, condemned, and puniſhed merely for their *Name*; this being the firſt and great Cauſe of all that Hatred and Cruelty that

Chap. 4.

Juſt. Mart. Ap. 1. *p.* 43.

Ap. c. 3. *p.* 4.

Ad Demet. p. 200.

Vid. Tert. Ap. c. 1, 2, 3 *Juſt. Mart. Ap.* 2. *p.* 54, 68, 69. *Athenag. leg. pro Chriſtian. p.* 3, 4.

was

Part I. was exercised towards them: 'twas the innocent Name that was hated in them; all the Quarrel was about this Title; and when a Christian was guilty of nothing else, 'twas this made him guilty, as *Tertullian* complains at every turn. The truth is, they mightily gloried in this *Title*, and were ambitious to own it in the face of the greatest Danger. Therefore when *Attalus*, the famous *French Martyr*, was led about the *Amphitheatre*, that he might be exposed to the Hatred and Derision of the People, he triumphed in this, that a *Tablet* was carried before him with this Inscription, THIS IS *ATTALUS* THE CHRISTIAN. And *Sanctus* (another of them) being oft asked by the *President* what his Name was, what his City and Country, and whether he was a Free Man or a Servant? answered nothing more to any of them, than that he was a *Christian*; professing this Name to be Country, Kindred, and all things to him. Nay, so great was the Honour and Value which they had for this Name, that *Julian* the Emperor (whom we commonly call the *Apostate*) endeavoured by all ways to suppress it, that when he could not drive the Thing, he might at least banish the Name out of the World; and therefore did not only himself constantly call Christians *Galileans*, but made a *Law* that they should be called only by that Name. But to return, the Sum is this; the Christians were so buoyed up with the Conscience of their Innocency, that they cared not who saw them, were willing and desirous to be scanned and searched to the bottom, and to lie open to the view of all; and therefore desire no other favour than that *Apology*, which *Justin Martyr* presented to them, might be set out with the Decree of the *Senate*, that so People might come to the true Knowledg of their Case, and they be delivered from false Suspicions, and those Accusations, for which they had been

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 1. p. 162.

Ib. p. 158.

Naz. Invect. in Julian. 1. p. 81.

Ap. 1. p. 51.

been undeservedly exposed to so many Punishments. Chap. 4.

Thirdly, They appealed for their Vindication to the Judgment and Conscience of their more sober and impartial Enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as guiltless of any heinous Crimes. *Pliny* the younger, being commanded by the Emperour *Trajan*, to give him an account of the *Christians*, tells him, That after the best Estimate that he could take, and the strictest Inquisition that he could make by Tortures, he found no worse of them than this; That they were wont to meet early for the performance of their solemn Devotions, and to bind themselves under the most *sacred Obligations* to commit no Vice or Wickedness; and that their Religion was nothing else but an Untoward and Immoderate Superstition. This is the *Testimony* which that great Man (who being *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*, was capable to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the matter) gives concerning them. Next after him, *Serenus Granianus* (the *Proconsul* of *Asia*) writes to the Emperour *Adrian*, *Trajan*'s Successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put Christians to death, when no Crime was duly laid to their Charge, merely to gratify the tumultuous Clamours of the People: to whom the *Emperor* answers, That they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was truly prov'd against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the Fault; but if done out of Malice or Spite, he should then accordingly punish the Accuser as a Calumniator. Next to *Adrian*, *Antoninus Pius* (if he be not mistaken for his Successor *Marcus*) in his Epistle to the *Commons* of *Asia*, tells them, That they had traduced the *Christians*, and had objected those Crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunted in their * Profession than themselves, and

Ep. l. 10. *Ep.* 97.

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. *c.* 8, 9. *p.* 122.

Just. Mart. Ap. 2. *p.* 100.

* Εὐπαῤῥησίας ὅτερον.

Part I. had a greater Freedom and Confidence towards God; and that therefore he resolved to ratify and follow the determination of his Fathers. After him comes *M. Antoninus*, who having obtained that famous and signal Victory against the *Quades* in *Germany*, confesses in his Letter to the Senate, (which Letter, though I know 'tis questioned by some Learned Men, as now extant, whether true and genuine; yet that there was such a Letter, is evident enough from *Tertullian*, who himself lived within a few Years of that time, and appeals to it) that it was clearly gotten by the Prayers of the *Christian Legion* which he had in his Army, and therefore commands that none be molested for being Christians; and that if any accuse a Christian for being such, without a sufficient Crime proved against him, he shall be burnt alive for his Accusation: That a Christian confessing himself to be one, shall be safe and secure, and that the *Governour* of the *Province* shall not drive him to renounce his Profession; and this he commands to be confirmed by the Decree of the *Senate*. So clear did the Christians appear to their greatest Enemies, especially in their more calm and sober Intervals. Nay, *Trypho* the *Jew* (and that every Notion speaks him Enemy enough) yet confesses them clear of those foul Aspersions: For when the *Martyr* had asked him, Whether he disliked the Christians Manners and Way of Life, and whether he really believed that they eat Mens Flesh, and putting out the Candles ran together in promiscuous Mixtures; the *Jew* answered, That those things whereof they were accused by many were unworthy of Belief, as being so extremely abhorrent to Human Nature; and that the Precepts which are commanded in their Gospel (which his Curiosity had prompted him to *read*) were so *great* and *admirable*, that he supposed no Man could be able

Ib. p. 101, 102.

Ap. c. 5. *p.* 6. *& ad Sca. c.* 4. *p.* 71.

Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 227.

able to keep and obey them. And, to instance in no more, the *Heathen Oracle* it self pronounced in favour of the Christians; for *Apollo* giving forth his Oracles, not as he was wont by human Voice, but out of a dark and dismal *Cavern*, confessed it was because of *just Men* that lived upon the Earth: And when *Diocletian* enquired who those just Men were, one of the Heathen *Priests* that stood by answered, That they were the *Christians*. This *Constantine the Great* tells us he himself heard, being then a young Man, and in Company at that time with the Emperor *Diocletian*, and he there solemnly calls God to witness for the truth of the Story. Chap. 4. *Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 2. c. 50, 51. p. 467.*

From all which it appears, how innocent the Christians were of those things which the *Gentiles* charged upon them, how infinitely strict and unblamable in their Lives, and therefore triumphed over the Heathens in the Purity and Innocency of their Conversations. *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that the Churches of God which had taken upon them the Discipline of *Christ*, if compared to the common Societies of Men, *were amongst them like Lights in the World.* For who (says he) is here, but he must needs confess that the worser part of our Church is much better than the popular Assemblies? As for instance; the *Church* of God at *Athens* is meek and quiet, as endeavouring to approve it self to the great God; whereas now the *popular Assembly* of *Athens* is seditious and tumultuous, and no ways to be compared with the Church of God in that City. And the same may be said of the Churches of God, and the vulgar Assemblies which are at *Corinth* or *Alexandria*. So *Minutius Fælix*; Should we Christians be compared with you, although our Discipline may seem somewhat inferiour, yet we should be found infinitely to transcend you. You forbid Adultery, and then *practise* it; we keep entirely to our own Wives. You punish *Lib. 3. p. 128, 129.* *Pag. 29.*

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Part I. Wickedness when *committed*, with us even a wicked *Thought* is Sin; you stand in awe of those who are *conscious* of your Crimes, we of nothing but our *Consciences*, without which we cannot be. And last of all, 'tis with your *Party* that the Prison is filled and crouded; no *Christian* is there, unless such a one as is either a Shame to his Religion, or an Apostate from it. And a little after, he tells his Adversary, how much they exceeded the best Philosophers, who were filthy and tyrannical, and only eloquent to declaim against those Vices, of which themselves were most guilty: That we Christians do not measure Wisdom by Mens Habits, but by their Minds and Tempers, and do not speak great things, but live them; having this to boast of, that we really attain to those things which they earnestly sought, but could not find. Thus *Lactantius* having excellently discoursed of the prodigious Debaucheries and Wickednesses of the Heathens; but which of these things (says he) can be objected to our People, whose whole Religion is to live *without Spot or Blemish?* From whence they might easily gather, had they any Understanding, that Piety is on our side, and that they themselves are vile and impious. And *Eusebius* tells us, that in this time the Christian Faith had by Gravity, Sincerity, Modesty, and Holiness of Life, so conquered all Opposition, that none durst bespatter it, or charge it with any of those Calumnies which the antient Enemies of our Religion used to fasten upon it. What Religion (says *Arnobius*) can be truer, more useful, powerful, just, than this? Which (as he elsewhere notes) renders Men Meek, Speakers of Truth, Modest, Chaste, Charitable, Kind, and Helpful to all, as if most nearly related to us. And indeed, this is the genuine and natural tendency of the Christian Doctrine, and which it cannot but effect where-

Pag. 31.

De justit. l. 5. *c.* 9. *p.* 485.

Hist. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 7. *p.* 121.

*Vide Constant. Or. ad cœtum. S. S. c.*23. *p.* 599.

Adv. gent. l. 4. *p.* 67.

wherever 'tis kindly embraced and entertained. So true is that which *Athenagoras* told the *Emperors*, that no *Christian* could be a bad Man, unless he were an *Hypocrite*. And *Tertullian* openly declares, That when Men depart from the Discipline of the Gospel, they so far cease amongst us to be accounted *Christians*. And therefore when the Heathens objected, That some that went under that Name were guilty of great Enormities, and inquired, how comes such a one to be a Cheat, if the Christians be so righteous; how so cruel, if they be merciful? he answers, That by this very thing they bore witness, that they who were real Christians were not such; that there's a vast difference between the *Crime* and the *Name*, the *Opinion* and the *Truth*; that they are not presently Christians that are called so, but cheat others by the pretence of a Name; that they shunn'd the Company of such, and did not meet or partake with them in the Offices of Religion; that they did not admit *those* whom mere Force and Cruelty had driven to deny *Christianity*, much less such as voluntarily transgressed the Christian Discipline: And that therefore the Heathens did very ill to call them *Christians*, whom the Christians themselves did disown, who yet were not wont to deny their own Party.

Chap. 4.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 4. Ap. c. 46. p. 36. Ad Nation. l. 1. c. 5. p. 42.

CHAP. V.

Of the Positive Parts of their Religion: and first, of their Piety towards God.

The Religion of the antient Christians considered, with respect to God, themselves, and other Men. Their Piety seen in two things; their Detestation of Idolatry, and great Care about the matters of Divine Worship. What Notion they had of Idolatry; their Abhorrency of it. Their refusing to give Divine Honour to Angels and created Spirits: This condemned by the Laodicean *Council. Their denying any thing of Divine Honour to Martyrs and departed Saints. The famous Instance of the Church of* Smyrna, *concerning* St. Polycarp. St. Augustine's *Testimonies to this purpose. Their mighty abhorrence of the Heathen Idolatry. The very making an Idol accounted unlawful. Hatred of Idolatry one of the first Principles instilled into new Converts. Their affectionate bewailing any that lapsed into this Sin. Several severe Penalties imposed by the antient Council of* Illiberis, *upon Persons guilty of Idolatry: they were willing to hazard any thing, rather than sacrifice to the Gods.* Constantius *his Plot to try the Integrity of his Courtiers. A double Instance of the Christian Soldiers in* Julian's *Army; their active Zeal in*

in breaking the Images of the Heathen Gods, and assaulting Persons while doing Sacrifice to them; this, whether justifiable. Notwithstanding all this, the Christians accused by the Heathens of Idolatry; of worshipping the Sun; whence that Charge arose. Of adoring a Cross. Of worshipping an Ass's Head. Christians called Asinarii. *The absurd and monstrous Picture of Christ mentioned by* Tertullian. *The occasion of this ridiculous Fiction whence.*

Chap. 5.

HAving thus seen with how much clearness the antient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust Aspersions, which their spightful and malicious Adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct and positive view of their Religion, which, according to St. *Paul*'s division, we shall consider as to their *Piety* towards God, those *Vertues* which more immediately concerned *themselves*, and those which respected their Behaviour and Carriage towards *others*. Their *Piety* towards God appeared in those two main Instances of it, a serious and hearty detestation of **Idolatry**, and a religious Care about the Concerns of **Divine Worship**.

Tit. 2. 12.

Idolatry in those times was the prevailing Sin of the World, *the principal Crime of Mankind, the great Guilt of the Age, and the almost sole Cause of Mens being brought into Judgment*; as what in a manner contains all Sins under it, as *Tertullian* begins his Book upon that Subject; a Crime of the *first Rank*, and one of the *highest sorts of Wickedness*, as 'tis called by the most *antient Council* in *Spain*. They looked upon it as a Sin that undermined the very

De Idololat. c. 1. *p.* 85.

Conc. Illiberit. Can. 1.

Part I. Being of the Deity, and raviſhed the honour of his Crown. Before we proceed any further, we ſhall firſt inquire what was the Notion they generally had of Idolatry; and they then accounted that a Man was guilty of Idolatry, when he gave *Divine Adoration* to any thing that was *not God*; not only when he worſhipped a *material Idol*, but when he veſted *any Creature* with that religious Reſpect and Veneration that was only due to God: Idolatry (ſays *Tertullian*) robs God, denying him thoſe Honours that are due to him, and conferring them upon others, ſo that at the ſame time it does both *Defraud* him and *Reproach* him. And a little after he expreſly affirms, That whatever is exalted above the Standard of *Civil Worſhip*, in imitation of the Divine Excellency, is directly made an Idol. Thus St. *Gregory*, for his ſolid and excellent Learning call'd *the Divine*, (a Title never given to any beſides him, but to St. *John* the *Apoſtle*) defines Idolatry (which, *ſays he*, is the greateſt evil in the World) to be *the tranſlation of that Worſhip that is due to the Creator upon the Creature.* Accordingly we find them infinitely zealous to aſſert Divine Adoration as the proper and incommunicable Prerogative of God alone, and abſolutely refuſing to impart religious Worſhip to any, though the beſt of Creatures: Surely if any, one would think *Angels*, the firſt Rank of *created* Beings, Creatures of ſuch ſublime Excellencies and Perfections, might have challenged it at their hands; but hear what *Origen* ſays to this; We adore *(ſays he)* our Lord God, and ſerve him *alone*, following the Example of *Chriſt*, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worſhip him, anſwered, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*; which is the reaſon why we refuſe to give Honours to thoſe Spirits that *preſide* over human Affairs, becauſe *we cannot ſerve two Maſters*, to wit, *God* and *Mammon*:

Ut ſupra c. 11.

Ibid. c. 15. p. 95.

Greg. Naz. Orat. Paneg. in Nativit. Chriſti. Or. 38. p. 620.

Contr. Celſ. l. 8. p. 415, 416.

mon; as for these *Dæmons*, we know that they have no Administration of the Conveniencies of Man's Life; yea, tho we know that they are not *Dæmons* but *Angels*, that they have the Government of Fruits and Seasons, and the Productions of Animals committed to them; we indeed speak *well* of them, and think them *happy* that they are intrusted by God to manage the Conveniences of Man's Life; but yet do not give them that Honour that is only due to God: for this neither does God allow of, neither do they desire it; but equally love and regard us when we do not, as if we did sacrifice to them. And when *Celsus* a little before had smartly pressed him to do honour to *Dæmons*, he rejects the motion with great Contempt: Away, *says he*, with this Counsel of *Celsus*, who in this is not in the least to be hearkened to; for the Great God only is to be adored, and Prayers to be delivered up by none but his only begotten Son, *the First-born of every Creature*, that, as *our High Priest*, he may carry them to *his Father* and to *our Father*, *to his God* and *to our God*. 'Tis true, that the Worship of *Angels* did (and that very early, as appears from the *Apostles* Caveat against it in his *Epistle* to the *Colossians*) creep into some Parts of the Christian Church, but was always disowned and cried out against, and at last publickly and solemnly condemned by the whole *Laodicean Council*: *It is not lawful (says the thirty fifth Canon of that Council) for Christians to leave the Church of God, and to go and invocate Angels, and to make prohibited Assemblies: If therefore any one should be found devoting himself to this private Idolatry, let him be accursed; forasmuch as he has forsaken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as has delivered up himself to Idolatry.* From which nothing can be more clear, than that it was the Sense of these *Fathers*, that the *worshipping of Angels* was not only downright *Idolatry*,

Chap. 5.

Pag. 395.

Part I. *Idolatry*, but a plain *Apostacy* from the Christian Faith.

Nor were they more peremptory in denying Divine Honour to *Angels*, than they were to *Martyrs* and *departed Saints:* For tho they had a mighty Honour and Respect for *Martyrs* (as we shall take notice afterwards) as those that had maintained the Truth of their Religion, and sealed it with their Blood, and therefore did what they could to do praise and honour to their Memories; yet were they far from placing any thing of Religion or Divine Adoration in it: whereof, 'twill be enough to quote one famous Instance. The Church of *Smyrna*, writing to the Churches of *Pontus*, to give them an account of the Martyrdom of *Polycarpus* their Bi-
Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 134 shop, tells them, That after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have gotten the *Remains* of his Body, to have given them decent and honourable Burial, but were prevented in it by some *Jews*, who importuned the *Proconsul* to the contrary; suggesting, that the Christians leaving their *crucified* Master, might henceforth worship *Polycarpus*; whereupon they add, that this Suggestion must needs proceed from Ignorance of the true State of Christians: *This they did* (say they) *not considering how impossible 'tis that ever we should either forsake Christ, who died for the Salvation of Mankind, or that we should worship any other. We adore him as the Son of God; but the Martyrs, as the Disciples and Followers of our Lord, we deservedly love for their eminent Kindness to their own Prince and Master, whose Companions and Fellow-Disciples we also by all means desire to be.* This Instance is so much the more valuable in this Case, not only because so *plain* and *pertinent*, but because so *antient*, and from Persons of so great *Authority* in the Church: For this is not the Testimony of any one private Person, but of

of the whole Church of *Smyrna*, according as it had been trained up under the Doctrine and Discipline of *Polycarpus*, the immediate Disciple of St. *John*. This was the Doctrine and Practice of Christians then, and it held so for some Ages after, even down to the times of St. *Augustine*; when yet, in many other things, the Simplicity of the Christian Religion began to decline apace: We set apart, *says he*, no *Temples*, nor *Priests*, nor *Divine Services*, nor *Sacrifices* to *Martyrs*, because they are *not God*, but the same who is theirs, is our God: indeed we honour their *Memories* as of holy Men, who have stood for the Truth, even unto Death, that so the true Religion might appear, and those which are false might be convinced to be so; but who ever heard a *Priest* standing at the *Altar*, built for the Honour and Worship of God over the Body of the holy *Martyr*, to say in his Prayers, *I offer Sacrifice to thee* Peter, *or* Paul, *or* Cyprian; for in such Commemorations we offer to that God, who made them both Men and Martyrs, and has made them Partners with holy Angels in the heavenly Glory; and by these Solemnities we both give Thanks to the true God for the Victories which they have gain'd, and also stir up our selves by begging his Assistance, to contend for such Crowns and Rewards as they are possessed of: so that whatever Offices religious Men perform in the *Places* of the *Martyrs*, they are only *Ornaments* to their Memories, not *Sacrifices* or Divine Services done to the Departed, as if they were Deities. More to the same purpose we may find in that place, as also in infinite other Places of his Works; where (were it worth the while) I could easily shew, that he does no less frequently than expressly assert, That tho the *Honour* of *Love*, *Respect and Imitation*, yet no *religious Adoration* is due either to *Angels*, *Martyrs*, or *departed Saints*.

Chap. 5.

Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 8. c. 27. p. 49. vid. l. 22. c. 10. col. 1355.

But

Part I. But the great Inſtance wherein the Primitive *Chriſtians* manifeſted their Deteſtation of Idolatry, was in reſpect of the *idolatrous Worſhip* of the Heathen World, the denying and abhorring any thing of Divine Honour that was done to their Gods. They looked upon the very *making* of Idols (tho with no Intention to worſhip them) as an unlawful Trade, and inconſiſtent with *Chriſtianity: How have we renounced the Devil and all his Angels* (ſays *Tertullian*, meaning their *ſolemn Renunciation in Baptiſm) if we make Idols? nor is it enough to ſay, tho I make them, I do not worſhip them; there being the ſame Cauſe not to make them, that there is not to worſhip them*, viz. *the Offence that in both is done to God: yet thou doſt ſo far worſhip them, as thou makeſt them that others may worſhip them.* And therefore he roundly pronounces, that no *Art*, no *Profeſſion*, no *Service* whatſoever, that is imployed either in *making* or *miniſtring* to Idols, can come ſhort of Idolatry. They ſtartled at any thing that had but the leaſt *ſhadow* of ſymbolizing with them in their Idolatry; therefore the *Ancyran* Council condemned them to a two years Suſpenſion from the *Sacrament*, who ſat down with their *Heathen Friends* upon their ſolemn Feſtivals in their *Idol Temples*, altho they brought their own Proviſions along with them, and touched not one bit of what had *been* offered to the Idol. Their firſt Care in inſtructing new Converts, was to leaven them with the Hatred of Idolatry: *Thoſe that are to be initiated into our Religion* (ſays *Origen*) *we do before all things inſtil into them a great Diſlike and Contempt of all Idols and Images, and lift up their Minds from worſhipping Creatures inſtead of God, to him who is the great Creator of the World.* If any thro Weakneſs chanced at any time to lapſe into this Sin, how *pathetically* did they bewail it? So *Celerinus*, in his *Epiſtle* to *Lucian*, giving him an account of a Woman,

De Idololat. c. 6. p. 88.

Cap. 11. p. 92. vid. c. 9, 10.

Can. 7.

Adv. Celſ. l. 3. p. 120.

Inter Epiſt. Cypr. Ep. 20. p. 32.

Woman, that to avoid Perſecution, had done Sacrifice, and thereby fallen from *Chriſt*, he bewails her as *dead*; tells him, that it ſtuck ſo cloſe to him, that tho in the time of *Eaſter*, a time of Feſtivity and Rejoicing, yet he wept Night and Day, and kept company with Sackcloth and Aſhes, and reſolved to do ſo, till by the help of *Chriſt*, and the Prayers of good Men, ſhe ſhould by Repentance be raiſed up again. The better to prevent this Sin (wherein weaker *Chriſtians* were ſometimes enſnared in thoſe times of Cruelty and Perſecution) the Diſcipline of the antient Church was very ſevere againſt it; of which we can have no better Evidence, than to take a little view of the Determinations relating to this Caſe of that antient Council of *Illiberis*, held ſome years before the time of *Conſtantine*; there we find, That if any *Chriſtian* after Baptiſm took upon him the *Flaminſhip*, or Prieſthood of the *Gentiles* (an Office ordinarily devolved upon the better ſort, and which *Chriſtians* ſometimes either made ſuit for, to gain more favour with the People, or had it forced upon them by the Laws of the Country; ſo that they muſt either undergo it, or fly and forfeit their Eſtates) ſuch a one, no not at the hour of *Death*, was to be received into the *Communion of the* Church. The reaſon of which Severity was, becauſe whoever underwent that Office muſt do *ſacrifice* to the Gods, and entertain the People with ſeveral kind of Sights, Plays and Sports; which could not be managed without Murders, and the exerciſe of all Luſt and Filthineſs, whereby they did *double* and *treble* their Sin, as that Council ſpeaks. If a *Chriſtian* in that Office did but allow the *Charges* to maintain thoſe Sports and Sights (altho he did not *actually ſacrifice*, which he might avoid, by ſubſtituting a *Gentile* Prieſt in his room) he was indeed to be taken into *Communion* at laſt, but was to undergo a very ſevere

Chap. 5.

Concil. Illiber. Can. 2. vid. Not. Albaſpin. p. 5. & de Tit. Eccleſ. Obſ. 22.

Vid. Can. 3. p. 8.

Part I. ſevere *Penance* for it all his Life. Nay, altho he did neither of the former, yet if he did but wear a *Crown* (a thing uſually done by the Heathen Prieſts) he was to be excluded from Communion for *two years* together. If a Chriſtian went up to the *Capitol* (probably out of Curioſity) only to ſee the Sacrifice of the *Gentiles*, and did not ſee them, yet he ſhould be as guilty as if he had ſeen them; his Intention and Will being the ſame, as the learned *Albaſpine* (and I think truly) underſtands the *Canon*. And in ſuch a caſe, if the Perſon was one of the *Faithful*, he was not to be received till after *ten years* Repentance. Every Maſter of a Family was commanded to ſuffer no *little Idols* or *Images* to be kept in his Houſe, to be worſhipped by his Children or Servants; but if this could not be done without danger of being betrayed and accuſed by his Servants (a thing not unuſual in thoſe times) that then at leaſt he himſelf ſhould abſtain from them, otherwiſe to be thrown out of the Church. Being imbued with ſuch *Principles*, and trained up under ſuch a *Diſcipline* as this, 'tis no wonder if they would *do* or *ſuffer* any thing rather than comply with the leaſt Symptom of Idolatry. They willingly underwent Baniſhment and Confiſcation, amongſt ſeveral of which ſort, *Caldonius* tells *Cyprian* of one *Bona*, who being violently drawn by her Husband to ſacrifice, they by force guided her Hand to do it, cried out and proteſted againſt it that 'twas not *ſhe* but *they* that did it, and was thereupon ſent into Baniſhment. They freely laid down their greateſt Honours and Dignities, rather than by any *idolatrous* Act to offer Violence to their Conſciences; whereof *Conſtantius*, the Father of *Conſtantine*, made this wiſe Experiment: He gave out that all the Officers and Great Men of the *Court* ſhould either do ſacrifice to the Gods, or immediately quit his Service,

Can. 55. *p.* 69.

Can. 59. *p.* 71.

Can. 41. *p.* 57.

Ep. 18. *p.* 30.

Euſeb. de Vit. Conſt. l. 1. *c.* 19. *p.* 117.

vice, and the Offices and Preferments which they held under him; whereupon many turned about, while others remained firm and unshaken. Upon this the prudent and excellent Prince discovered his Plot, embraced, commended and advanced to greater Honours those who were faithful to their Religion and their Conscience; reproaching and turning off those who were so ready to acquit and forfeit them. Thus *Jovianus*, a Man of considerable Note and Quality, and an Officer of great place in *Julian*'s Army, when the Emperor sent out his Edict, That all the Soldiers should either sacrifice or lay down their Arms, presently threw away his *Belt*, rather than he would obey that impious Command; tho the Emperor at that time, for Reasons of State, would not suffer him to depart. And after the Death of *Julian*, when by the unanimous Vote of the whole Army he was chosen Emperor, he utterly refus'd it, till the Army had renounc'd their *Pagan* Idolatry and Superstition. And tho 'tis true that *Life* is dearest to Men of all things in this World, yet how chearfully did they chuse rather to shed their Blood, than to defile their Consciences with Idolatry; of which *Eusebius* gives us many Instances: And indeed this was the common Test in those times, Either *sacrifice* or *die*. *Phileas* Bishop of *Thumis*, in a Letter to his People, giving them an account of the Martyrdoms that happened at *Alexandria*, tells them, that many, after having endured strange and unheard of Torments, were put to their choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at liberty, or refuse and lose their Heads; whereupon all of them, without any hesitation, readily went to embrace Death; knowing well how the Scripture is, *That whoever sacrifices unto strange Gods shall be cut off:* And again, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.* And in the next Chapter, *Eusebius* tells us of a whole City of Christians

Chap. 5.

Socr. Hist. Eccles. l.3. c.22.p.195

Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l.8. c.10.p.304

Part I. Christians in *Phrygia*, which, together with all the Men, Women and Children, was burnt to Ashes, for no other reason, but because they universally confessed themselves to be *Christians*, and refused to obey those that commanded them to worship Idols: Instances of which kind there are enough to be met with in the *Histories* of the Church.

And so fixed and unmovable were they in this, that no Promises or Hopes of Reward, no Fear or Threatning could either tempt or startle them; a memorable Passage or two that we meet withal to this purpose: It was a Custom amongst the *Romans* to shew some Respect and Honour, not only to the *Emperors* themselves, but even to their *Statues* and *Images*, by bowing the Body, or some other Act of external Veneration. Now *Julian* the Emperor (whose great Design was to reduce all Men, but especially his Army, back to Paganism and Idolatry) made use of this crafty Project; he placed the Pictures of *Jupiter*, and other Heathen Gods, so close to his own *Statues*, that they could not bow to the one but they must also to the other: politickly reducing them to this strait, that either they must refuse to pay civil Honour to their Prince (which had been a sufficient Crime against them) or seem at least to do *Honour* unto the Gods. With this Device the less *wary* and cautelous were intrapped; but others that were more pious and prudent, chose rather to deny the Prince that Civil Homage, and fall into the hands of Martyrdom, than by such an ambiguous Adoration to seem to patronize Idolatry. At another time he fell upon this Stratagem: Upon a solemn day, when the Emperors were wont to bestow *Largesses* upon the *Soldiers*, he caused the Army to be called before him, sitting then in great Pomp and Splendor, and a large *Donative* of Gold to

Naz. Orat. Invect. 1. in Julian. Or. 13. p. 90. Vid. Sozom. Hist.

Eccles. l. 5. c. 17. Naz. ib. p. 84.

to be laid on the one side, and an heap of Frankincense by it on the other; Proclamation being made, that they that would sacrifice the *one*, should have the *other*. By this means many of the *Christian* Soldiers were insnared, performed the Sacrifice, received the Donative, and went home jolly and secure. But being at Dinner with their Companions, and drinking to each other (as the Custom was) with their Eyes lift up, and calling upon *Christ*, and making the *Sign of the Cross* as oft as they took the Cup into their Hands; one at the Table told them, he wondered how they could call upon *Christ* whom they had so lately abjured. Amazed at this, and asking how they had abjured him, they were told, that they had *sacrificed*, which was all one as to *deny Christ*. Whereupon starting up from the Table, they ran up and down the Market-place in a furious and frantick manner, crying out, *We are Christians, we are Christians in Heart and Truth*, and let all the World take notice that there is but *one God*, to whom we *live*, and for whom we'll *die*. We have not broken the Faith which we swore to thee, *O blessed Saviour*, nor renounced our Profession. If our *Hands* be guilty, our *Hearts* are innocent. 'Tis not the *Gold* that has corrupted us, but the Emperor's *Craftiness* hath deceived us. And with that running to the Emperor, they threw down their *Gold* before him, with this Address; *We have not, Sir, received a Donative, but are condemned to die. Instead of being* honoured, *we are* vilified *and disgraced. Take this Largess, and give it to your Soldiers; as for us, kill us, and sacrifice us to* Christ, *whom alone we own as our highest Prince. Return us* Fire *for* Fire, *and for the* Ashes *of the Sacrifice reduce us to* Ashes. *Cut off those* Hands *which we so wickedly stretched out, those* Feet *that carried us to so great a Mischief. Give others the* Gold, *who may have no* Chap. 5.

Part I. *Cause to repent on't; for our part, Christ is enough for us, whom we value instead of all things.* With this noble and generous Resolution, tho the Emperor was highly inraged; yet because he envied them the Honour of *Martyrdom*, he would not put them to Death, but banished them, and inflicted other Penalties which might sufficiently evidence his Rage against them.

Nay, with so warm a Zeal were they acted against Idolatry, that many of them could not contain themselves from falling foul upon it, wherever they met it, tho with the immediate hazard of their Lives. So *Romanus* (Deacon and Exorcist of the Church of *Cæsarea*) seeing great Multitudes of People at *Antioch* flocking to the Temples, and doing sacrifice to the Gods, came to them, and began very severely to reprove and reproach them; for which being apprehended, after many strange and cruel Usages he was put to Death with all imaginable Pain and Torture. Thus *Apphianus* (a young Man) when the Criers by Proclamation summoned all the Inhabitants of *Cæsarea* to sacrifice to the Gods; the *Tribunes* particularly reciting every Man's Name out of a Book, to the great Terror of all that were Christians; privately and unknown to us (says *Eusebius*, who lived at that time in the same House with him) stole out, and getting near *Urbanus* the *President* (who was then compassed about with a *Guard* of Soldiers) just as he was about to offer Sacrifice, caught hold of his right hand, which he grasped so fast, that he forced him to let fall the Sacrifice, gravely admonishing him to desist from such Errors and Vanities: *Clearly shewing*, says the *Historian*, *that true* Christians *are so far from being drawn from the Worship of the True God, that by Threatnings and Torments they are rather heightened into a greater and more ingenuous Freedom and Boldness in the Profession of the Truth.* For this Fact the young Man was al-

Euseb. de Mart. Pac. c. 2. p. 320.

Ib c. 4. p. 324.

most

most torn in pieces by the Soldiers, whose Rage and Fierceness could scarce suffer him to be reprieved for acuter Tortures, which were exercised towards him with all possible Cruelty; and when all could do no good upon him, he was thrown half dead into the Sea. The like we read of three famous *Christians* at *Merum*, a City in *Phrygia*; where, when the Governor of the *Province* under *Julian* the *Apostate*, had commanded the Heathen Temple to be opened, they got by night into the Temple, and broke to pieces all the *Statues* and *Images* of the Gods. Whereupon when a general Persecution was like to rise against all the *Christians* of the City, that the *Ignorant* and *Innocent* might not suffer, the Authors of the Fact came of their own accord to the Judg, and confessed it; who offered them Pardon if they would sacrifice, which they rejected with Disdain, and told him they were much readier to endure any Torments, and Death it self, than to be defiled with sacrificing: And accordingly were first treated with all sorts of Torments, and then burnt upon an *Iron-Grate*, retaining their Courage to the last, and took their leave of the Governor with this *Sarcasm*; *If thou hast a mind*, Amachius, *to eat roast Meat, turn us on the other side, lest we be but half roasted, and so prove ungrateful to thy Taste.* So mightily did a restless Passion for the Divine Honour possess the Minds of those Primitive Christians; and tho,'tis true, such Transports of Zeal are not ordinarily warrantable (for which reason the Council of *Illiberis* justly prohibited those who were killed in the defacing and demolishing Idols, to be reckoned in the number of *Martyrs*) yet do they sufficiently shew what a Spirit of Eagerness and Activity ruled in those times against the false Religions of the World.

Chap. 5.

Socr. Hist. Eccl. l.3.c. 15. p. 186.

By all this we may see how unjustly the Christians were traduced and accused for *Idolaters*. Three

Part. I. things were commonly charged upon them; that they worshipped the *Sun*, the *Cross*, and an *Ass's Head*. For the first, their worshipping the *Sun*, *Tertullian* answers, That the Mistake arose from a double Cause, partly that the *Christians* of those times did generally pray towards the *East* and the *Sun-rising*, which the Heathens themselves also did, tho upon different Grounds: And partly because they performed the Solemnities of their Religion upon the *Day* that was dedicated to the *Sun*, which made the *Gentiles* suspect that they worshipped the *Sun* it self. They were next charged with worshipping *Crosses*, a Charge directly false. As for Crosses (says *Octavius*) we neither *desire* nor *worship them*; 'tis you who consecrate wooden Gods, that perhaps adore wooden Crosses as parts of them: For what else are your *Ensigns*, *Banners* and *Colours*, with which you go out to War, but *Golden* and *Painted Crosses?* The very *Trophies* of your Victory do not only resemble the fashion of a simple Cross, but of a Man that's fastened to it. The very same Answer which *Tertullian* also returns to this Charge. The occasion of it no doubt was the Christians talking of, and magnifying so much their *crucified* Master, and their almost constant use of the *Sign of the Cross*, which (as we shall see afterwards) they made use of even in the most common Actions of their Lives. But for paying any Adoration to a *material* Cross, was a thing to which those times were the greatest Strangers. Otherwise understanding the Cross for him that hung upon it, they were not ashamed (with the Great Apostle) *to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and to count it the matter of their highest Joy and Triumph. But the absurdest part of the Charge was, that they worshipped the *Head of an Ass*. I hear (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) that being seduced by I know not what fond Persuasion,

Apol. c. 16. p. 16.

Min. Fel. p. 24.

Loc. supra citat.

Pag. 8.

sion, they worship the *consecrated Head of an Ass*, one of the filthiest Creatures; a Religion fitly calculated for Persons of such a *dull* and *stupid* Disposition. Hence *Tertullian* tells us, that *Christians* were called *Asinarii*, Ass-worshippers, and that *Christ* was painted and publickly exposed by the bold wicked Hand of an Apostate *Jew*, with *Ass's Ears*, one of his *Feet hoof'd*, holding a *Book* in his *Hand*, and having a *Gown* over him, with this Inscription: Chap. 5. *Ibid. Vid. ad Nation. l.* 1. *c.* 14. *p.* 50.

DEUS CHRISTIANORUM ONONYCHITES;

The Ass-hoofed God of the Christians.

Onony-chites.] *De variis hujus vocis lectionibus, vid. Rigalt. in loc. & Voss. de Idol. l.* 3. *c.* 75. *p.* 565. *Pag.* 23.

A most ridiculous Representation, and the Issue of the most foolish Spite and Malice. *When I saw it* (says he) *I laughed at both the Title and the Fashion.* This, *Octavius* tells his Adversary, was the Result and Spawn of lying Fame, begot and nourished by the Father of Lyes: For who, says he, can be so silly as to worship this? or who can be so much more silly, as to believe it should be worshipped? unless it be that you your selves do consecrate whole Asses in the Stable with your Goddess *Epona*, and religiously adorn them in the Solemnities of *Isis*, and both sacrifice and adore the Heads of Rams and Oxen, and make Gods of a mixture of a *Goat* and a *Man*, and dedicate them with the Faces of *Dogs* and *Lions*. More he has there to the same purpose, as *Tertullian* also had answered the same thing before him. The true Ground of this ridiculous Charge (as *Tertullian* observes) was a fabulous Report that had been a long time common amongst the Heathens, That the *Jews*, when wandering in the Wilderness, and almost ready to die of Thirst, were conducted by wild Asses to a Fountain of Water; for which great kindness they formed the shape of an Ass, and ever after wor-

Vid. etiam ad Nation. l. 1. *c.* 11. *p.* 49.

Part I. shipped it with Divine Honours. This is confidently reported both by *Tacitus* and *Plutarch*, as it had been many years before by *Apio* the *Alexandrian*, in his Books against the *Jews*. And by this means the Heathens, who did frequently confound the *Jews* and *Christians*, came to form and fasten this Charge upon them, when it was equally false in respect of both. For as *Tertullian* observes, the same *Tacitus*, who reports this, tells us in another place, that when *Pompey*, at the taking of *Jerusalem*, presumptuously broke into the *Holy of Holies* (whither none but the *High Priest* might enter) out of a Curiosity to pry into the most hidden Secrets and *Arcana* of their Religion, he found no Image at all there; whereas (says *Tertullian*) had they worshipped any such thing, there had been no likelier place to have met with it: and therefore brands him with the Charge of *the most lying Historian in the World*. And thus we see how the antient *Christians* manifested and maintained their Love and Piety towards God, by a most vigorous and hearty Opposition of that Idolatry, that reigned so uncontrolably in the Heathen World.

Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 4. Plut. Sympos l. 4. Quæst. 5. p. 670.

Apol. c. 16.

CHAP. VI.

Of Churches and Places of Publick Worship in the Primitive Times.

Place, a Circumstance necessary to every Action. The Piety of Christians in founding Places for the Solemnities of Religion. They had distinct and separate Places for their Publick Assemblies, even in the Apostles times. This proved out of the New Testament, as also in the succeeding

ceeding Ages, from the Testimonies of the Fathers and Heathen Writers. The common Objection of the Gentiles, that Christians had no Temples, considered and answered. Churches increased as Christianity met with favourable Entertainment: Restored and repaired by Diocletian, Maximinus, Constantine The Fashion of their Churches oblong, built towards the East. The Form of their Churches described. The Vestibulum or Porch. The Narthex, and what in it. The Nave or Body of the Church. The Ambo or Reading-Pew. The Station of the Faithful. The ἱερατεῖον, or Chancel. The Altarium, or Lord's Table. The Bishop's Throne, and Seats of the Presbyters. The Diaconian what. The Prothesis. Christians then beautified their Churches. Whether they had Altars in them. Decent Tables for the Celebration of the Divine Offices. Those frequently by the Fathers stiled Altars, and in what Sense. They had no such gaudy Altars as the Heathens had in their Temples, and the Papists now in their Churches. Altars when begun to be fixed and made of Stone. Made Asylums and Places of Refuge, and invested with many Privileges by Christian Emperors. No Images in their Churches for above four hundred years, proved out of the Fathers. Pictures in Churches condemned by the Council of Illiberis. An Account of Epiphanius's tearing the Picture of Christ in the Church of Anablatha; and the great force of the Argument thence against Image-worship. Chap. 6.

worſhip. Chriſtian Churches when firſt formerly conſecrated. The Encœnia *of the antient Church. Our Wakes or Feaſts in memory of the Dedication of particular Churches. What Incomes or Revenues they had in the firſt Ages. Particular Churches had ſome ſtanding Revenues, even under the Heathen Emperors. Theſe much increaſed by the Piety of* Conſtantine *and the firſt Chriſtian Princes; their Laws noted to that purpoſe. Their Reverence ſhewed at their going into Churches, and during their ſtay there, even by the Emperors themſelves.*

THE Primitive *Chriſtians* were not more heartily zealous againſt the idolatrous Worſhip of the Heathen Gods, than they were religiouſly obſervant of whatever concerned the Honour and Worſhip of the true, as to all the material Parts and Circumſtances of it; as will eaſily appear, if we conſider what Care they had about the *Place*, *Time*, *Perſons*, and both the *Matter* and the *Manner* of that Worſhip that they performed to God. Under each of which we ſhall take notice of what is moſt conſiderable, and does moſt properly relate to it, ſo far as the Records of thoſe times give us an account of it.

Place is an unſeparable Circumſtance of religious Worſhip; for every Body, by the natural neceſſity of its Being, requires ſome determinate Place either for Reſt or Motion. Now the Worſhip of God being in a great part an external Action, eſpecially when performed by the joint Concurrence of ſeveral Perſons, does not only neceſſarily require a *Place*, but a Place *conveniently capacious* of all that join together in the ſame publick Actions of Religion. This reaſon

reason put all Nations, even by the Light of Nature, upon Erecting *publick Places* for the Honour of their Gods, and for their own Conveniency in meeting together to pay their religious Services and Devotions. But my present Inquiry reaches no further than the *Primitive Christians*, not whether they met together for the discharge of their common Duties, (which I suppose none can doubt of) but whether they had *Churches* fixed, and appropriate Places for the joint Performance of their Publick Offices. And that they had, even in those early Times, will, I think, be beyond all Dispute, if we take but a short Survey of those first Ages of *Christianity*. In the Sacred Story, we find some more than probable Footsteps of some determinate Places for their solemn Conventions, and peculiar only to that use. Of this nature was that ὑπερῶον, or *Upper Room* into which the *Apostles* and Disciples (after the return from the Ascension of our Saviour) went up, as into a place commonly known and separate to that use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make choice of a new Apostle; and this supposed by a very antient Tradition to have been the *same Room* wherein our Saviour, the Night before his Death, celebrated the Passover with his Disciples, and instituted the *Lord's Supper*. Such a one, if not (which I rather think) the same, was that *one Place*, wherein they were all assembled with one accord upon the Day of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Ghost visibly came down upon them. And this the rather, because the Multitude (and they too *strangers of every Nation under Heaven)* came so readily to the Place upon the first Rumour of so strange an Accident; which could hardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the Place where the *Christians* used to meet together. And this very Learned Men take to be the meaning of that, *Acts* 2. 46. *They continued daily with one accord in the Temple*,

Chap. 6.

Act. 1. 13.

Act. 2. 1.

Part I. *Temple, and breaking Bread,* κατ' οἶκον, not as we render it, *from House to House, but at Home,* as 'tis in the *Margin,* or *in the House; they eat their Meat with gladness and singleness of Heart: i. e.* when they had performed their daily Devotions at the *Temple,* at the accustomed Hours of Prayer, they used to return home to this *Upper Room,* there to celebrate the Holy *Eucharist,* and then go to their ordinary Meals. This seems to be a clear and unforced Interpretation, and to me the more probable, because it immediately follows upon their assembling together in that one Place at the Day of *Pentecost*; which Room is also called by the same name of *House,* at the *second Verse* of that *Chapter.* And 'tis no ways unlikely (as Mr. *Mede* conjectures) but that when the first Believers *sold their Houses and Lands, and laid the Mony at the Apostles Feet* to supply the Necessities of the Church, some of them might give their Houses (at least some eminent Room in them) for the Church to meet, and perform their sacred Duties. Which also may be the reason why the Apostle, writing to the particular *Christians,* speaks so often of the *Church that was in their House:* Which seems clearly to intimate, not so much the particular Persons of any private Family, living together under the same Band of *Christian* Discipline, as that in such or such a House (and more especially in this or that Room of it) there was the constant and solemn Convention of the *Christians* of that Place, for their joint Celebration of Divine Worship. And this will be further cleared by that famous Passage of St. *Paul,* where, taxing the *Corinthians* for their Irreverence and Abuse of the *Lord's Supper,* one greedily eating before another, and some of them to great Excess; *What* (says he) *have you not Houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?* Where, that by *Church* is not meant the *Assembly* meeting,

1 *Cor.* 11. 22.

meeting, but the *Place* in which they used to assemble, is evident, partly from what went before; for *their coming together in the Church*, *verse* 18. is expounded by *their coming together into one Place*, *verse* 20. plainly arguing, that the Apostle meant not the Persons, but the Place: partly from the Opposition which he makes between the Church and their own private Houses. If they must have such irregular Banquets, they had Houses of their own, where 'twas much fitter to do it, and to have their ordinary Repast, than in that *Place* which was set apart for the common Exercises of Religion, and therefore ought not to be dishonoured by such extravagant and intemperate Feastings: for which cause he enjoins them, in the *close* of that *Chapter*, *that if any Man hunger he should eat at Home*. And that this place was always thus understood by the Fathers of old, were no hard matter to make out; as also by most Learned Men of later times; of which it shall suffice to intimate two of our own, Men of great Name and Learning, who have done it to great satisfaction. Chap. 6. *Nic. Full. Miscell. S. l. 2. c. 9. Mr. Mede. p. 405.*

Thus stood the Case during the *Apostles* Times: for the Ages after them, we find that the *Christians* had their fixed and definite Places of Worship, especially in the second *Century*; as, had we no other Evidence, might be made good from the Testimony of the Author of that *Dialogue* in *Lucian*, (if not *Lucian* himself, of which I see no great cause to doubt) who lived under the Reign of *Trajan*, and who expressly mentions that *House* or *Room* wherein the *Christians* were wont to assemble together. And *Clemens* (in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*) assures us, That *Christ* did not only appoint the times *when*, the Persons by *whom*, but the Places *where* he would be solemnly served and worshipped. And *Justin Martyr* expressly affirms, That upon *Sunday* all *Philopatr. tom. 2. p. 1007.* *Pag. 52.* *Ap. 2. p. 98.*

Part I. all *Christians* (whether in Town or Country) used to assemble together in *one Place*; which could hardly be done, had not that Place been fixed and settled. The same we find afterwards in several places of *Tertullian*, who speaks of their coming into the Church and the House of God, which he elsewhere calls the *House of our Dove*, *i. e.* our Innocent and Dove-like Religion; and there describes the very Form and Fashion of it. And in another place, speaking of their going into the Water to be baptized, he tells us, They were wont first to go into the Church to make their solemn Renunciation before the Bishop. About this time, in the Reign of *Alexander Severus* the Emperor, (who began his Reign about the Year 222.) the Heathen Historian tells us, That when there was a Contest between the *Christians* and the *Vintners*, about a certain publick Place which the Christians had seized and challenged for theirs; the Emperor gave the Cause for the *Christians* against the Vintners, saying, *'Twas much better that God should be worshipped there any ways, than that the* Vintners *should possess it.* If it shall be said, that the Heathens of those Times generally accused the Christians for having no Temples, and charged it upon them as a piece of *Atheism and Impiety*; and that the Christian *Apologists* did not deny it; as will appear to any that will take the pains to examine the places alledged in the Magin: To this the Answer in short depends upon the *Notion* which they had of a *Temple*, by which the Gentiles understood the Places devoted to their Gods, and wherein their Deities were inclosed and shut up; Places adorned with Statues and Images, with fine Altars and Ornaments. And for such Temples as these, they freely confessed they had none, no nor ought to have; for that the true God did not (as the Heathens supposed theirs) *dwell in Temples made with*

De Idolol. c. 7. p. 88. Adv. Valentin. c. 3. p. 2, 51.

De Corona Mil. c. 3. p. 101.

Lamprid. in vit. Alex. Sever. c. 49. p. 575.

Min. Fæl. p. 8.—26. Arnob. adv. Gent. l. 6. p. 83. Lact. de Orig. error. l. 2. c. 2. p. 141.

with Hands, nor either needed nor could possibly be honoured by them: And therefore they purposely abstained from the word *Temple*, and I do not remember that 'tis used by any Christian Writer for the Place of the Christians Assemblies, for the best part of the first three hundred Years. And yet those very Writers who deny *Christians* to have had any Temples, do at the same time acknowledg that they had their Meeting-Places for Divine Worship, their *Conventicula*, as *Arnobius* calls them, and complains they were furiously demolished by their Enemies. If any desire to know more concerning this, as also that *Christians* had appropriate Places of Worship for the greatest part of the three first Centuries, let them read a Discourse purposely written upon this Subject by *a most learned Man of* our own Nation: Nor indeed should I have said so much as I have about it, but that I had noted most of these things before I read his Discourse upon that Subject. Chap. 6. *Lib.* 4. *p.* 67. *Mr.* Jos. Mede's *Discourse concerning Churches*, *Op. part* 1. *l.* 2.

Afterwards their Churches began to rise apace, according as they met with more quiet and favourable times; especially under *Valerian*, *Gallienus*, *Claudius*, *Aurelian*, and some other Emperors: Of which Times *Eusebius* tells us, That the *Bishops* met with the highest Respect and Kindness, both from People and Governors. And adds, But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable Multitudes that daily flocked to the Faith of *Christ*, the number of Congregations in every *City*, those famous Meetings of theirs in their *Oratories* or sacred Places; so great, that not being content with those old Buildings which they had before, they erected from the very Foundations more fair and spacious Churches in every City? This was several Years before the times of *Constantine*, and yet even they had their Churches of *antient Date*. This indeed was a very serene and sun-shiny Season, but alas! it begun to darken again, *Hist. Eccl. l.* 8. *c.* 1. *p.* 292.

Part I. again, and *the Clouds returned after the Rain:* for in the very next Chapter he tells us, That in the Reign of *Diocleſian* there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding all *Chriſtians* to be perſecuted, the Biſhops to be impriſoned, the Holy Bible to be burnt, and their Churches to be demoliſhed and laid level with the Ground; which how many they were, may be gueſſed at by this, That (as *Optatus* tells us) there were about this time above forty *Baſilicæ* or Churches in *Rome* only. Upon *Conſtantine*'s coming into a Partnerſhip of the Empire, the Clouds began to diſperſe and ſcatter; and *Maximinus* (who then govern'd the *Eaſtern* Parts of the Empire) a bitter Enemy to *Chriſtians*, was yet forced by a publick Edict to give *Chriſtians* the free Liberty of their Religion, and leave to repair and rebuild τὰ κυριακὰ τὰ ἰδιεῖα, their Churches: which ſhortly after they every where ſet upon, raiſing their Churches from the Ground to a vaſt height, and to a far greater Splendor and Glory than thoſe which they had before; the Emperors giving all poſſible Encouragement to it by frequent Laws and Conſtitutions; the Chriſtians alſo themſelves contributing towards it with the greateſt Chearfulneſs and Liberality, even to a Magnificence comparable to that of the *Jewiſh* Princes towards the Building of *Solomon*'s *Temple*; as *Euſebius* tells them, in his *Oration* at the Dedication of the famous Church at *Tyre*. And no ſooner was the whole Empire devolved upon *Conſtantine*, but he publiſhed two Laws; one to prohibit *Pagan Worſhip*, the other commanding *Churches* to be built of a nobler ſize and capacity than before: To which purpoſe he directed his Letters to *Euſebius*, and the reſt of the Biſhops, to ſee it done within their ſeveral Juriſdictions; charging alſo the Governors of the Provinces to be aſſiſting to them, and to furniſh them with whatever was neceſſary and convenient:

De Schiſm. Donat. l. 2. p. 40.

Euſeb. l. 9. c. 10. p. 364.

Id. lib. 10. c. 2. p. 370.

Ib. c. 4. p. 377.

De vita Conſtant. l. 2. c. 45, 46. p. 464.

venient: Insomuch that in a short time the World was beautified with Churches and sacred Oratories, both in Cities and Villages, and in the most barbarous and desart Places; called Κυριακὰ, says the *Historian*, (from whence our *Kirk* and *Church*) the *Lord's Houses*, because erected not to Men, but to the Honour of our *Lord* and *Saviour*. 'Twere needless to insist any longer upon the Piety of Christians in building Churches in and after the time of *Constantine*, the Instances being so vastly numerous; only I cannot omit what *Nazianzen* reports of his own Father, who (though Bishop of a very small and inconsiderable Diocess, yet) built a famous Church almost wholly at his own Charge. Chap. 6. *Orat. de laud. Const. c. 7. p. 660.* *Or. funebr. in laud. Patr. Or. 19. p. 313.*

Thus we have seen, That from the very Infancy of the Gospel, the Christians always had their settled and determinate Places of Divine Worship. For the Form and Fashion of their Churches, it was for the most part *oblong*, to keep (say some) the better Correspondence with the Fashion of a *Ship*, the common Notion and Metaphor by which the Church was wont to be represented, and to put us in mind that we are tossed up and down in the World as upon a stormy and tempestuous *Sea*, and that out of the Church there's no safe Passage to Heaven, the Country we all hope to arrive at. They were generally built *towards the East* (towards which also they performed the most solemn parts of their Worship, the reasons whereof we shall see afterwards in its due place) following herein the Custom of the Gentiles, though upon far other Grounds than they did: and this seems to have obtained from the first Ages of *Christianity*; sure I am, 'twas so in *Tertullian*'s time, who opposing the plain and simple way of the *Orthodox* Assemblies, to the *skulking and clancular* Conventicles of the Hereticks, who, *Serpent-like*, crept about in Holes and Corners; says he, *Constit. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 875.* *Adv. Valentin. p. 251.*

The

Part I.

The House of our Dove-like Religion is simple, built on high and in an open view, and respects the Light as the Figure of the Holy Spirit, and the East as the Representation of Christ. It cannot be thought that in the first Ages, while the Flames of Persecution raged about their Ears, the *Christian* Churches should be very stately and magnificent, but such as the condition of those Times would bear; their Splendor increasing according to the Entertainment that Christianity met withal in the World: till the Empire becoming Christians, their Temples rose up into *Grandeur* and *Gallantry*; as, amongst others, may appear by the particular Description which *Eusebius* makes of the *Church* of *Tyre*, mention'd before, and that which *Constantine* built at *Constantinople*, in honour of the Apostles; both which were incomparably sumptuous and magnificent.

De vita Const. l. 4. c. 58, 59. p. 555.

I shall not undertake to describe at large the exact Form, and the several Parts and Dimensions of their Churches, (which varied somewhat according to different Times and Ages) but briefly reflect upon such as were most common and remarkable. At the entrance of their Churches (especially after they began to arrive at more Perfection) was the *Vestibulum* (called also *Atrium* and περιστόον) the *Porch*, in greater Churches of somewhat larger Capacity, adorned many times with Cloisters, Marble-Columns, Fountains, and Cisterns of Waters, and covered over for the Conveniency of those that stood or walked there. Here stood the lowest order of *Penitents*, begging the Prayers of the Faithful as they went in. For the Church it self, it usually consisted of three parts: the first was the *Narthex* (which we have no proper word to render by) it was that part of the Church that lay next to the great Door by which they entred in; in the first part of it stood the *Catechumens*, or first Learners of Christianity; in the middle the

Euergu-

Energumeni, or those who were *possessed by Satan*; and in this part also stood the *Font* or place of *Baptismal* Initiation: and towards the upper end was the place of the Hearers, who were one of the Ranks of *Penitents*. The second part contained the middle or main Body of the Church (called by the *Greeks* Ναὸς, by the *Latins Navis*, from whence our term the *Nave* of the Church comes) where the *Faithful* assembled for the Celebration of Divine Service; where the Men and the Women had their distinct *Apartments*, lest at such times unchaste and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another: of which pious and excellent Contrivance, mention is made in an antient Funeral *Inscription* found in the *Vatican Cœmetery* at *Rome*; such a one buried *SINISTRA PARTE VIRORUM*, on that *Side* of the Church where the *Men sat*. In this part of the Church, next to the entring into it, stood the Class of the *Penitents*, who were called ὑποπίπτοντες, because at their going out they fell down upon their Knees before the Bishop, who laid his Hands upon them. Next to them was the *Ambo*, the *Pulpit*, or rather *Reading-Desk*, whence the Scriptures were read and preached to the People. Above that, were the Faithful, the highest Rank and Order of the People, and who alone communicated at the Lord's Table. The third part was the βῆμα or ἱερατεῖον, separate from the rest of the Church by neat *Rails*, called *Cancelli*, whence our *English* word *Chancel*, to denote that part of the Church to this day: into this part none might come but such as were in Holy *Orders*, unless it were the *Greek Emperors* at *Constantinople*, who were allowed to come up to the Table to make their *Offerings*, and so back again. Within this Division the most considerable thing was the θυσιαστήριον, the *Altar* (as they metaphorically called it, because there they offered

Chap. 6.

Const. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 875.

Roma subterran. l. 2. c. 10. num. 23. p. 204.

Part I. the *Commemorative Sacrifice* of Christ's Body and Blood) or the *Communion-Table* (ἡ Ἁγία τράπεζα, as 'tis frequently stiled by the *Greek* Fathers) behind which at the very upper end of the Chancel, was the *Chair* or *Throne* of the Bishop (for so was it almost constantly called) on both sides whereof were the σύνθρονοι, the *Seats* of the *Presbyters* (for the *Deacons* might not here set down.) The Bishop's Throne was raised up somewhat higher from the Ground, and from thence I suppose it was that he usually delivered his Sermons to the People. Therefore *Socrates* seems to note it as a new thing in *Chrysostom*, that when he preached he went to sit ἐπὶ τοῦ ἄμβωνος, *upon the Pulpit* (he means that in the Body of the Church, for so *Sozomen* tells us that he sat in the *Reading-Desk* in the middle of the Church) that by reason of his low Voice he might be better heard of the People. Adjoining to the Chancel on the *North side*, probably, was the *Diaçonicon*, mentioned both in the *Laodicean Council* (though I know both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon*, and after them the learned *Leo Allatius*, will have another thing to be meant in that place) as also in a Law of *Arcadius* and *Honorius* against *Hereticks*, and probably so called either because peculiarly committed to the *Deacon* of the place, or (as the great Commentator upon that Law will have it) because set apart ἡ ἱερᾶ διακονία, to some Sacred Services. It was in the nature of our modern *Vestries*, the *Sacristy*, wherein the Plate, Vessels and Vestments belonging to the Church, and other things dedicated to Holy Uses, were laid up, and where (in after times) *Reliques* and such like Fopperies were treasured up with great Care and Diligence. On the other side of the Chancel was the *Prothesis* or place where things were prepared in order to the Sacrament, where the Offerings were laid, and what remained of the Sacramental Elements, till they were decently

Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 5. p. 334.
Lib. 8. c. 5. p. 764.
Can. 21. De Templ. Græc. num. 14. p. 25.
C. Th. l. 16. tit. 5. l. 29. ubi vid. Jac. Gothofr. Com.

decently disposed of. And this may serve for a short View of the Churches of those first Times, after they began to grow up into some Beauty and Perfection. Chap. 6.

But though the Christians of those Times spared no convenient *Cost* in founding and adorning Publick Places for the Worship of God, yet were they careful to keep a decent Mean between a sordid *Slovenliness*, and a too curious and over-nice *Superstition*. In the more early Times, even while the Fury and Fierceness of their Enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautified their Oratories and Places of Worship; especially if we may believe the *Author of the* Dialogue in *Lucian* (whom we mentioned before, and who lived within the first Age) who bringing in one *Critias*, that was persuaded by the Christians to go to the Place of their Assembly (which by his Description seems to have been an ὑπερῶον, or *Upper Room*) tells us, that after they had gone up several Stairs, they came at last into an *House or Room that was overlaid with Gold*, where he beheld nothing but a Company of Persons with their Bodies bowed down, and pale Faces. I know the Design of that Dialogue in part is to abuse and deride the Christians, but there's no reason to suppose he feigned those Circumstances which made nothing to his purpose. As the Times grew better, they added more and greater Ornaments to them; concerning two whereof there has been some Contest in the Christian World, *Altars* and *Images*. As for *Altars*, the first Christians had no other in their Churches than *decent Tables* of Wood, upon which they celebrated the Holy *Eucharist*: these, 'tis true, in Allusion to those in the *Jewish* Temple, the Fathers generally called *Altars*; and truly enough might do so, by reason of those Sacrifices they offered upon them, *viz.* the Commemoration of *Christ's Sacrifice* in the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacri-

Part. I. fice of *Prayer and Thankſgiving*, and the Oblation of *Alms and Charity* for the Poor (uſually laid upon thoſe Tables) which the Apoſtle expreſly ſtiles *a Sacrifice*. Theſe were the only *Sacrifices* (for no other had the Chriſtian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offered upon their *Altars*, which were much of the ſame kind with our *Communion-Tables* at this day. For that they had not any ſuch *fixed and gaudy* Altars (as the *Heathens* then had in their *Temples*, and *Papiſts* ſtill have in their *Churches*) is moſt evident, becauſe the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Anſwers did freely and openly acknowledg and avow it; aſſerting and pleading that the only true *Sacred Altar* was a *pure* and *holy Mind*, and that the beſt and moſt *acceptable* Sacrifice to God was a *pious Heart*, and an *innocent and religious Life*. *Hæc noſtra ſacrificia, hæc Dei ſacra ſunt: Theſe* (ſay they) *are our Oblations, theſe the Sacrifices we owe to God.* This was the State of *Altars* in the Chriſtian Churches for near upon the firſt three hundred Years; till *Conſtantine* coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Coſtlineſs and Bravery every day, and then the wooden and movable Altars began to be turned into fixed Altars of *Stone* or *Marble*, though uſed to no other purpoſe than before: and yet this too did not ſo univerſally obtain (though ſeverely urged by *Sylveſter* Biſhop of *Rome*) but that in very many places Tables or movable Altars of Wood continued in uſe a long time after, as might eaſily been made appear from ſeveral Paſſages in *Athanaſius* and others, yea, even to St. *Auguſtine*'s time, and probably much later, were it proper to my Buſineſs to ſearch after it. No ſooner were Altars made fixed and immovable, but they were compaſſed in with *Rails* to fence off Rudeneſs

Vide Clem. Alex. ſtromat. l. 7. p. 117. Orig. adv. Celſ. l. 4. p. 383. Min. Fœl. p. 8--26. Arnob. adv. gent. l. 6. p. 83. Lact. l. 2. c. 2.

Athan. ad Orthodox. p. 728. to. 1. & ep. ad ſolit. vit. agent.

neſs and Irreverence, and Perſons began to regard them with mighty Obſervance and Reſpect; which ſoon grew ſo high, that they became *Aſylums* and Refuges to protect innocent Perſons and unwitting Offenders from immediate Violence and Oppreſſion: an Inſtance whereof *Nazianzen* gives us in a Chriſtian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the Preſident, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in St. *Baſil*'s Church at *Cæſarea*. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man ſtoutly refuſed, although the Preſident was his mortal Enemy, and ſought only a pretence to ruin him. Many ſuch caſes may be met with in the Hiſtory of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege merely founded upon Cuſtom, but ſettled and ratified by the Laws of *Chriſtian Emperors*; concerning the particular caſes whereof, together with the Extent and Limitation of theſe *Immunities*, there are no leſs than ſix ſeveral Laws of the Emperors *Theodoſius*, *Arcadius*, and *Theodoſius junior*, yet extant in the *Theodoſian Code*. But how far thoſe *Aſyla's* and *Sanctuaries* were good and uſeful, and to what evil and pernicious Purpoſes they were improved in After-times, is without the Limits of my preſent Task to enquire.

Chap. 6.

Aug. quæſt. E. & N. T. quæſt. 101. *& alibi ſæpe.*

Orat. 20. *in laud. Bazil. p.* 353.

Lib. 9. *tit.* 45. *de his qui ad Eccleſias confugiunt.*

But if in thoſe Times there was ſo little ground for Altars (as uſed in the preſent Senſe of the *Church* of *Rome*) there was yet far leſs for *Images*; and certainly might things be carried by a fair and impartial Trial of Antiquity, the Diſpute would ſoon be at an end; there not being any one juſt and good Authority to prove, that *Images* were either *worſhipped* or *uſed* in Churches, for near upon four hundred Years after *Chriſt*: and I doubt not but it might be carried much further, but that my Buſineſs

Part. I. fice of *Prayer and Thankſgiving*, and the Oblation of *Alms and Charity* for the Poor (uſually laid upon thoſe Tables) which the Apoſtle expreſly ſtiles *a Sacrifice*. Theſe were the only *Sacrifices* (for no other had the Chriſtian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offered upon their *Altars*, which were much of the ſame kind with our *Communion-Tables* at this day. For that they had not any ſuch *fixed and gaudy* Altars (as the *Heathens* then had in their *Temples*, and *Papiſts* ſtill have in their *Churches*) is moſt evident, becauſe the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Anſwers did freely and openly acknowledg and avow it; aſſerting and pleading that the only true *Sacred Altar* was a *pure* and *holy Mind*, and that the beſt and moſt *acceptable* Sacrifice to God was a *pious Heart*, and an *innocent and religious Life*. *Hæc noſtra ſacrificia, hæc Dei ſacra ſunt: Theſe* (ſay they) *are our Oblations, theſe the Sacrifices we owe to God.* This was the State of *Altars* in the Chriſtian Churches for near upon the firſt three hundred Years; till *Conſtantine* coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Coſtlineſs and Bravery every day, and then the wooden and movable Altars began to be turned into fixed Altars of *Stone* or *Marble*, though uſed to no other purpoſe than before: and yet this too did not ſo univerſally obtain (though ſeverely urged by *Sylveſter* Biſhop of *Rome*) but that in very many places Tables or movable Altars of Wood continued in uſe a long time after, as might eaſily been made appear from ſeveral Paſſages in *Athanaſius* and others, yea, even to St. *Auguſtine*'s time, and probably much later, were it proper to my Buſineſs to ſearch after it. No ſooner were Altars made fixed and immovable, but they were compaſſed in with *Rails* to fence off Rudeneſs

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Athan. ad Orthodox. p. 728. to. 1. & ep. ad ſolit. vit. agent.

ness and Irreverence, and Persons began to regard them with mighty Observance and Respect; which soon grew so high, that they became *Asylums* and Refuges to protect innocent Persons and unwitting Offenders from immediate Violence and Oppression: an Instance whereof *Nazianzen* gives us in a Christian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the President, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in St. *Basil*'s Church at *Cæsarea*. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man stoutly refused, although the President was his mortal Enemy, and sought only a pretence to ruin him. Many such cases may be met with in the History of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege merely founded upon Custom, but settled and ratified by the Laws of *Christian Emperors*; concerning the particular cases whereof, together with the Extent and Limitation of these *Immunities*, there are no less than six several Laws of the Emperors *Theodosius*, *Arcadius*, and *Theodosius junior*, yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*. But how far those *Asyla's* and *Sanctuaries* were good and useful, and to what evil and pernicious Purposes they were improved in After-times, is without the Limits of my present Task to enquire.

Chap. 6.

Aug. quæst. E. & N. T. quæst. 101. *& alibi sæpe.*

Orat. 20. *in laud. Basil. p.* 353.

Lib. 9. *tit.* 45. *de his qui ad Ecclesias confugiunt.*

But if in those Times there was so little ground for Altars (as used in the present Sense of the *Church* of *Rome*) there was yet far less for *Images*; and certainly might things be carried by a fair and impartial Trial of Antiquity, the Dispute would soon be at an end; there not being any one just and good Authority to prove, that *Images* were either *worshipped* or *used* in Churches, for near upon four hundred Years after *Christ*: and I doubt not but it might be carried much further, but that my Business

Part I. ſineſs lies mainly within thoſe firſt Ages of Chriſtianity. Nothing can be more clear, than that the Chriſtians were frequently challenged by the Heathens, as for having no *Altars* and *Temples*, ſo that they had no *Images* or *Statues* in them, and that the Chriſtian *Apologiſts* never denied it, but induſtriouſly defended themſelves againſt the Charge, and rejected the very Thoughts of any ſuch thing with Contempt and Scorn; as might be abundantly made good from *Tertullian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Arnobius*, and *Lactantius*, many of whoſe Teſtimonies have been formerly pointed to.

Lib. 8. *P.* 389. Amongſt other things *Origen* plainly tells his Adverſary (who had objected this to the Chriſtians) that the Images that were to be dedicated to God were not to be carved by the Hand of *Artiſts*, but to be formed and faſhioned in us by the *Word of God*, *viz.* the *Vertues* of Juſtice and Temperance, of Wiſdom and Piety, *&c.* that conform us to the Image of his only Son. *Theſe* (ſays he) *are the only Statues formed in our Minds, and by which alone we are perſuaded 'tis fit to do honour to him who is the Image of the inviſible God, the Prototype and Archetypal Pattern of all ſuch Images.* Had Chriſtians then given Adoration to them, or but ſet them up in their Places of Worſhip, with what face can we ſuppoſe they ſhould have told the World, that they ſo much ſlighted and abhorred them; and indeed what a hearty Deteſtation they univerſally ſhewed to any thing that had but the leaſt ſhadow of Idolatry, has been before proved at large. The Council of

Can. 36. *P.* 50. *Illiberis*, that was held in *Spain* ſome time before *Conſtantine*, expreſly provided againſt it, decreeing, that *no Pictures ought to be in the Church, nor that any thing that is worſhipped and adored ſhould be painted upon the Walls:* Words ſo clear and poſitive, as not to be evaded by all the little Shifts and Gloſſes which the

the Expoſitors of that *Canon* would put upon it. Chap. 6.
The firſt uſe of Statues and Pictures in publick Churches was merely Hiſtorical, or to add ſome Beauty and Ornament to the Place, which After-ages improved into Superſtition and Idolatry. The firſt that we meet with upon good Authority (for all the Inſtances brought for the firſt Ages are either falſe and ſpurious, or impertinent and to no purpoſe) is no older than the Times of *Epiphanius*, and then too met with no very welcome Entertainment, as may appear from *Epiphanius*'s own Epiſtle, tranſlated by St. *Hierom*; where the Story in ſhort is this: Coming (ſays he) to *Anablatha*, a Village in *Paleſtine*, and going into a Church to pray, I eſpied a Curtain hanging over the Door, whereon was painted the *Image of Chriſt*, or of ſome Saint; which when I looked upon, and ſaw the Image of a Man hanging up in the Church, *contrary to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, I preſently rent it, and adviſed the Guardians of the Church rather to make uſe of it as a winding Sheet for ſome poor Mans burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and ſaid, 'Twas but juſt that ſince I had rent that Curtain I ſhould change it, and give them another; I promiſed them I would, and have now ſent the beſt I could get: and pray intreat them to accept it, and give command that for the time to come no ſuch Curtains, being *contrary to our Religion*, may be hung up in the Church of *Chriſt*; it more becoming your Place ſollicitouſly to remove whatever is offenſive to, and unworthy of the Church of *Chriſt*, and the People committed to your Charge. This was written to *John* Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, in whoſe Dioceſs the thing had been done: and the Caſe is ſo much the more preſſing and weighty, by how much the greater Eſteem and Value *Epiphanius* (then Biſhop of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*)

Inter opera Hieron. to. 2. p. 161.

Part I. for his great Age and excellent Learning, had in the Church of God. This Instance is so home and pregnant, and that Patrons of *Image-Worship* are at a mighty loss what to say to it, and after all are forced to cry out against it as *supposititious*. *Bellarmine* brings no less than nine Arguments (if such they may be called) to make it seem probable: but had he been ingenuous, he might have given one reason more true and satisfactory than all the rest, why that part of the Epistle should be thought forged and spurious, *viz. Because it makes so much against them.* More might be produced to this purpose, but by this I hope 'tis clear enough, that the honest Christians of those Times, as they thought it sufficient to pray to God without making their Addresses to *Saints* and *Angels*, so they accounted their Churches fine enough without *Pictures* and *Images* to adorn them.

De Eccles. Triumph. l. 2. c. 9. col. 776.

Their Churches being built and beautified (so far as consisted with the Ability and Simplicity of those Days) they sought to derive a greater Value and Esteem upon them by some peculiar *Consecration*; for the Wisdom and Piety of those Times thought it not enough barely to devote them to the Publick Services of Religion, unless they also set them apart with solemn Rites of a formal *Dedication*. This had been an antient Custom both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as old as *Solomon*'s Temple, nay, as *Moses* and the *Tabernacle*. When 'twas first taken up by Christians, is not easy to determine; only I do not remember to have met with the Footsteps of any such thing in any approved Writer (for the *Decretal Epistles*, every one knows what their Faith is) till the Reign of *Constantine*. In his time Christianity being become more prosperous and successful, Churches were every where erected and repaired; and no sooner were so, but (as *Eusebius* tells us) they were solemnly

Hist. Eccl. l. 10. c. 3. p. 370.

solemnly consecrated, and the Dedication celebrated with great Festivity and Rejoicing: An Instance whereof he there gives of the famous Church of *Tyre*, at the Dedication whereof he himself made that excellent *Oration* inserted into the Body of his History. About the thirtieth Year of his Reign he built a stately Church at *Jerusalem*, over the *Sepulcher* of our *Saviour*, which was dedicated with singular Magnificence and Veneration; and for the greater Honour, by his Imperial Letters he summoned the Bishops, who from all parts of the *East*, were then met in Council at *Tyre*, to be present and assisting at the Solemnity. The Rites and Ceremonies used at these Dedications (as we find in *Eusebius*) were a great Confluence of Bishops and Strangers from all parts, the performance of Divine Offices, singing of Hymns and Psalms, reading and expounding of the Scriptures, Sermons, and Orations; receiving the Holy Sacrament, Prayers, and Thanksgivings, liberal Alms bestowed on the Poor, and great Gifts given to the Church; and in short, mighty Expressions of mutual Love and Kindness, and universal rejoicing with one another. What other particular Ceremonies were introduced afterwards, concerns not me to inquire; only let me note, that under some of the Christian Emperors, when *Paganism* lay gasping for Life, and their Temples were purged and converted into Christian Churches, they were usually consecrated only by placing a *Cross* in them, as the venerable Ensign of the Christian Religion; as appears by the Law of *Theodosius* the younger to that purpose. The memory of the Dedication of that Church at *Jerusalem*, was constantly continued and kept alive in that Church; and *once a Year*, to wit, on the 14th of *September*, on which Day it had been dedicated, was solemnized with great Pomp and much Confluence of People from all parts; the Solemnity usually lasting eight days

Chap. 6.

De vita Const. c. 42, 43.

Cod. Theod. l. 16. *tit.* 10. *de Pag. Sacrific. & Templis. leg.* 25. *ubi vid. Com. Gothofr. Niceph. Cal. Hist. Eccl. l.* 8. *c.* 50. *p.* 653.

Part I. days together. Which doubtless gave birth to that Custom, of keeping *anniversary Days* of Commemoration of the Dedication of Churches; which from this time forwards we frequently meet with in the Histories of the Church, and much prevailed in After-Ages: some shadow whereof still remains amongst us at this day, in the *Wakes* observed in several Counties, which in correspondence with the *Encœnia* of the antient Church, are annual Festivals kept in Country Villages in memory of the Dedication of their particular Churches.

And because it was a Custom in some Ages of the Church, that no Church should be *consecrated* till it was *endowed*, it may give us occasion to inquire what *Revenues* Churches had in those first Ages of Christianity. 'Tis more than probable, that for a great while they had no other publick Incomes, than either what arose out of those common Contributions which they made at their usual Assemblies, every one giving or offering according to his Ability or Devotion, which was put into a common Stock or Treasury; or what proceeded from the Offerings which they made out of the Improvement of their Lands, the *Apostolick* Can. 3, 4. *Canons* providing that their First-Fruits should be partly offered at the Church, partly sent home to the *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. The care of all which was committed to the *President* or *Bishop* of the Church; (for who, says the Author of the fore-cited *Canons*, Can. 41. is fitter to be trusted with the *Riches* and *Revenues* of the Church, than he who is intrusted with the *precious Souls* of Men?) and by him disposed of for the Maintenance of the *Clergy*, the Relief of the Poor, or whatever Necessities of the Church. As Christanity increased, and Times grew better, they obtained more proper and fixed Revenues, Houses and Lands being settled upon them; for such 'tis certain they had, even during the times of Persecution: for so

we

we find in a Law of *Constantine* and *Licinius*, where giving Liberty of Religion to Christians, and restoring them freely to the Churches which had been taken from them, and disposed of by former Emperors; they further add, And because (say they) the same Christians had not only Places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other Possessions, which were not the Propriety of any single Person, but belonged to the *whole Body and Community*: All these by this Law we command to be immediately restored to those Christians, to every Society and Community of them, what belonged to them. And in a Rescript to *Anulinus* the *Proconsul*, about the same matter, they particularly specify whether they be *Gardens* or *Houses*, or whatever else belonged to the Right and Propriety of those Churches, that with all speed they be universally restored to them: the same which *Maximinus* also (though no good Friend to Christians, yet either out of fear of *Constantine*, or from the Conviction of his Conscience, awakened by a terrible Sickness) had ordained for his parts of the Empire. Afterwards *Constantine* set himself by all ways to advance the Honour and Interests of the Church. Out of the Tributes of every City, which were yearly paid into his Exchequer, he assigned a portion to the Church and Clergy of that Place, and settled it by a Law; which (excepting the short Reign of *Julian*, who revoked it) was, as the Historian assures us, in force in his time. Where any of the Martyrs or Confessors had died without Kindred, or been banished their native Country, and left no Heirs behind them, he ordained that their Estates and Inheritance should be given to the Church of that Place; and that whoever had seized upon them, or had bought them of the Exchequer, should restore them, and refer themselves to him for what Recompence should be made them.

Chap. 6.

Euseb. l. 10. *c.* 5. *p.* 389.

Ib. p. 390.

Lib. 9. *p.* 364.

Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. *c.* 8. *p.* 411.

Ib. l. 5. *c.* 5. *p.* 600.

Euf. de vita Const. l. 2. *c.* 36. *& seq.*

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Part I. He took away the Reſtraint which former Emperors had laid upon the Bounty of pious and charitable Men, and gave every Man liberty to leave what he would to the Church. He gave Salaries out of the publick Corn, which (though taken away by *Julian*) was reſtored by his Succeſſor *Jovianus*, and ratified as a perpetual Donation by the Law of *Valentinian* and *Marcianus*. After his time the Revenues of Churches increaſed every Day; pious and devout Perſons thinking they could never enough teſtify their Piety to God, by expreſſing their Bounty and Liberality to the Church.

Cod. l. 1. tit. 2. de SS. Eccl. leg. 1.

Ib. leg. 12.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe, by obſerving what *Reſpect and Reverence* they were wont in thoſe days to ſhew in the Church, as the ſolemn Place of Worſhip, and where God did more peculiarly manifeſt his Preſence: And this certainly was very great. They came into the Church as into the *Palace* of the *great King* (as *Chryſoſtom* calls it) with Fear and Trembling; upon which account he there preſſes the higheſt Modeſty and Gravity upon them. Before their going into the Church, they uſed to *waſh*, at leaſt their Hands, as *Tertullian* probably intimates, and *Chryſoſtom* expreſly tells us, carrying themſelves, while there, with the moſt profound Silence and Devotion. Nay, ſo great was the Reverence which they bore to the Church, that the *Emperors* themſelves, who otherwiſe never went without their Guard about them, yet when they came to go into the Church, uſed to lay down their *Arms*, to leave their *Guard* behind them, and to put off their *Crowns*; reckoning that the leſs Oſtentation they made of Power and Greatneſs there, the more firmly the Imperial Majeſty would be intailed upon them: as we find it in the Law of *Theodoſius* and *Valentinian*, inſerted at large into the laſt Edition of the *Theodoſian Code*. But of this we may probably ſpeak more, when we come to treat of the manner of their publick Adoration.

Ep. ad Heb. in c. 9. Hom. 15. tom. 10. p. 1862.

Tert. de Orat. c. 11. p. 133.

Chryſoſt. Hom. 52. in Matth. p. 463. Hom. in Joan. 72. p. 371.

Lib. 9. tit. 45. leg. 4. vid. Chryſ. Orat. poſt redit. ab exil. tom. 4. p. 850

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Lord's Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the antient Church.

Time, as necessary to religious Actions, as Place. Fixed Times of Publick Worship observed by all Nations. The Lord's Day chiefly observed by Christians. Stiled Sunday, *and why. Peculiarly consecrated to the Memory of Christ's Resurrection. All kneeling at Prayer on this Day forbidden, and why. Their Publick Assemblies constantly held upon this Day. Forced to assemble before Day, in Times of Persecution; thence jeered by the Heathens, as* Latebrosa & Lucifugax Natio. *The Lord's Day ever kept as a Day of Rejoicing; all Fasting upon it forbidden. The great Care of* Constantine, *and the first Christian Emperors, for the Honour and Observance of this Day. Their Laws to that purpose. Their constant and conscientious Attendance upon Publick Worship on the Lord's Day. Canons of antient Councils about absenting from Publick Worship.* Sabbatum *or* Saturday *kept in the East as a Religious Day, with all the Publick Solemnities of Divine Worship. How it came to be so. Otherwise in the Western Churches: observed by them as a Fast, and why. This not universal. St.* Ambrose *his Practice at* Milan, *and Counsel to St.* Austine *in the Case. Their solemn Fasts, either Weekly or Annual: Weekly on* Wednesdays *and*

and Fridays, *held till Three in the Afternoon. Annual Fast, that of Lent how antient. Upon what account called* Quadrageſſima. *Obſerved with great ſtrictneſs. The* Hebdomada Magna, *or the Holy Week, kept with ſingular auſterity, and the reaſon of it. Feſtivals obſerved by the Primitive Chriſtians. That of* Eaſter *as antient as the times of the Apoſtles. An account of the famous Controverſy between the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches, about the keeping of* Eaſter. *The intemperate Spirit of Pope* Victor. Irenæus *his moderate Interpoſal. The caſe finally determined by the Council of* Nice. *The Vigils of this Feaſt obſerved with great Expreſſions of rejoicing. The Bounty of Chriſtian Emperors upon* Eaſter-Day. *The Feaſt of* Pentecoſt *how antient. Why ſtiled* Whitſunday. Dominica in Albis, *why ſo called. The whole ſpace between* Eaſter *and* Whitſuntide *kept Feſtival. The* Acts of the Apoſtles, *why publickly read during that time. The Feaſt of* Epiphany *antiently what.* Chriſtmas-Day, *the antient Obſervation of it.* Epiphany *in a ſtrict ſenſe what, and why ſo called. The* Memoriæ Martyrum, *what; when probably firſt begun. The great Reverence they had for Martyrs. Their Paſſions ſtiled their Birth-day, and why. Theſe Anniverſary Solemnities kept at the Tombs of Martyrs. Over theſe, magnificent Churches erected afterwards. What religious Exerciſes performed at thoſe Meetings. The firſt Riſe of Martyrologies. Oblations for Martyrs. How*

under-

understood in the antient Writers of the Church. These Festivals kept with great Rejoicing, mutual Love and Charity. Their συμποσια *or common Feasts. Markets held for that purpose in those Places. The ill use which after-times made of these Memorials.*

TIME is a Circumstance no less inseparable from religious Actions, than Place; for Man consisting of a Soul and Body, cannot always be actually engaged in the Service of God: that's the Privilege of Angels, and Souls freed from the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we are here, we must worship God with respect to our present State, and consequently of necessity have some definite and particular time to do it in. Now, that Man might not be left to a floating uncertainty, in a matter of so great Importance; in all Ages and Nations, Men have been guided by the very Dictates of Nature, to pitch upon some *certain Seasons*, wherein to assemble and meet together, to perform the Publick Offices of Religion. What, and how many were the publick *Festivals* instituted and observed, either amongst *Jews* or *Gentiles*, I am not concerned to take notice of. For the antient Christians, they ever had their peculiar Seasons, their solemn and stated times of meeting together to perform the common Duties of Divine Worship; of which, because the *LORD'S DAY* challenges the Precedency of all the rest, we shall begin first with that. And being unconcern'd in all the Controversies, which in the late times were raised about it; I shall only note some Instances of the Piety of Christians, in reference to this Day, which I have observed, in passing through the Writers of those Times. For the name of this Day of Publick Worship, it is sometimes (espe-

Part I. (especially by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*) called *Sunday*; because it happened upon that Day of the Week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun: and therefore, as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governors. This Title continued after the World became Christian; and seldom it is, that it passeth under any other Name in the Imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperors. But the more proper and prevailing Name was κυριακὴ, or *Dies Dominica*, the *Lord's Day*, as 'tis called by St. *John* himself; as being that Day of the Week, whereon our Lord made his triumphant Return from the Dead. This, *Justin Martyr* assures us, was the true Original of the Title: Upon *Sunday* (says he) we all assemble and meet together, as being the first Day, wherein God, parting the Darkness from the rude *Chaos*, created the World, and the same Day whereon *Jesus Christ*, our Saviour, rose again from the Dead; for he was crucified the Day before *Saturday*, and the Day after (which is *Sunday*) he appeared to his Apostles and Disciples. By this means observing a *kind* of Analogy and Proportion with the *Jewish* Sabbath, which had been instituted by God himself. For as that Day was kept as a Commemoration of God's *Sabbath*, or resting from the Work of Creation; so was this set apart for religious Uses, as the solemn Memorial of *Christ's* resting from the Work of our Redemption in this World, compleated upon the Day of his Resurrection. Which brings into my mind that Custom of theirs, so universally common in those Days; that whereas at other times they *kneeled* at Prayers, on the Lord's Day they always prayed *standing*, as is expressly affirmed both by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*: the reason of which we find in the *Author* of the *Questions* and *Answers* in *Justin Martyr*.

Rev. 1. 10.

Ap. 2. p. 99.

Ap. 2. p. 98.

De Coron. c. 3. p. 102.

Resp. ad quest. 115. p. 468.

Martyr. It is (says he) that by this means we may be put in mind both of our Fall by Sin, and our Resurrection or Restitution by the Grace of Christ: That for six days we pray upon our Knees, is in token of our Fall by Sin; but that on the Lord's-day we do not bow the Knee, does symbolically represent our *Resurrection*, by which, through the Grace of Christ, we are delivered from our Sins, and the Power of Death. This, he there tells us, was a Custom derived from the very times of the Apostles, for which he cites *Irenæus*, in his Book concerning *Easter*. And this Custom was maintained with so much vigour, that when some began to neglect it, the great Council of *Nice* took notice of it, and ordained, That there should be a constant *Uniformity* in this case, and that on the Lord's-day (and at such other times as were usual) Men should stand when they made their Prayers to God. So fit and reasonable did they they think it to do all possible Honour to that Day, on which Christ rose from the Dead. Therefore we may observe all along in the Sacred Story, that after Christ's Resurrection, the Apostles and Primitive Christians did especially assemble upon *the first Day of the Week*. And whatever they might do at other times, yet there are many Passages that intimate, that the first Day of the Week was their more solemn time of meeting. On this Day it was that they were met together when our Saviour first appeared to them, and so again the next Week after. On this Day they were assembled when the Holy Ghost so visibly came down upon them, when *Peter* preached that excellent Sermon, converted and baptized three thousand Souls. Thus when St. *Paul* was taking his leave at *Troas*, upon the *first Day of the Week*, when the Disciples came together to *break Bread*, *i. e.* as almost all agree, to celebrate the Holy Sacrament; he preached to them, sufficiently intimating,

Chap. 7.

Ap. 2. *p.* 98. *De Coron. c.* 3. *p.* 102. *Resp. ad quest.* 115. *p.* 468.

Can. 20.

1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2.

Part I. timating, that upon that day 'twas their usual Custom to meet in that manner. And elsewhere giving Directions to the Church of *Corinth* (as he had done in the like case to other Churches) concerning their Contributions to the poor suffering Brethren, he bids them lay it aside upon the first Day of the Week, which seems plainly to respect their religious Assemblies upon that day; for then it was that every one, according to his Ability, deposited something to the relief of the Poor, and the uses of the Church.

After the Apostles, the Christians constantly observed this Day, meeting together for Prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacrament, and other publick Duties of Religion. *Upon the Day called Sunday* (says *Justin Martyr*) *all of us that live either in City or Country, meet together in one place:* and what they then did, he there describes, of which afterwards. This doubtless *Pliny* meant, when giving *Trajan* an account of the Christians, he tells him, That they were wont to meet together to worship Christ *stato die*, upon a set certain Day, by which he can be reasonably understood to design no other but the Lord's-day; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes notice of this only, either because the Christians, whom he had examined, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or because this was their most publick and solemn Convention, and which in a manner swallowed up the rest. By a violent Persecution of those times, the Christians were forced to meet together before day; so *Pliny*, in the same place, tells the Emperor, that they assembled *before day-light to sing their morning-hymns to Christ.* Whence it is that *Tertullian* so often mentions their *nocturnal Convocations*; for putting the case that his Wife after his Decease should marry with a *Gentile* Husband, among other Inconveniencies he asks her, whether

Ap. 2. *p.* 98.

Lib. 10. *ep.* 97.

Ad uxor. l. 2. *c.* 4. *p.* 168.

whether she thought he would be willing to let her rise from his Bed to go to their *Night-meetings?* And in the case of Persecution he tells *Fabius*, That if they could not celebrate *Dominica Solennia*, their Lord's-day Solemnities in the Day-time, they had the *Night* sufficiently clear with the *Light* of Christ. This gave occasion to their spightful Adversaries to calumniate and asperse them. The Heathen in *Minutius* charges them with their *Night-Congregations*, upon which account they are there scornfully called *Latebrosa & lucifugax natio, an obscure and skulking Generation.* And the very first thing that *Celsus* objects, is, That the Christians had private and clancular Assemblies or Combinations: To which *Origen* answers, That if it were so, they might thank them for it, who would not suffer them to exercise it more openly; that the Christian Doctrine was sufficiently evident and obvious, and better known through the World than the Opinion and Sentiments of their best Philosophers; and that if there were some Mysteries in the Christian Religion which were not communicated to every one, 'twas no other thing than what was common in the several Sects of their own Philosophy. But to return;

Chap. 7.

De fug. in persecut. c. 14. p. 543.

M. Fœl. p. 7.

Orig. adv. Cels. 1. p. 4. ---- 7.

They looked upon the *Lord's-day*, as a time to be celebrated with great Expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christ's Resurrection, and accordingly restrained whatever might savour of Sorrow and Sadness; fasting on that day they prohibited with the greatest Severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as *Tertullian* informs us. It was a very bitter Censure of *Ignatius* (or whose soever that Epistle was, for certainly it was not his) that whoever *fasts* on a *Lord's-day* is a *Murderer of Christ*; however 'tis certain, that they never fasted on those Days, no not in the time of *Lent* it self. Nay, the *Montanists*, though otherwise great Pretenders to

De coron. mil. c. 3. p. 102.

Ep. ad Philip. p. 112.

Part I. Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it on the Lord's-day. And as they accounted it a joyful and good Day, so they did whatever they thought might contribute to the Honour of it. No sooner was *Constantine* come over to the Church, but his principal Care was about the *Lord's-day*; he commanded it to be solemnly observed, and that by all Persons whatsoever; he made it to all a Day of *Rest*, that Men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and spend their whole time, without any thing to hinder them, in Prayer and Devotion, according to the Custom and Discipline of the Church. And for those in his Army, who yet remained in their *Paganism* and Infidelity, he commanded them upon *Lord's-days* to go out into the Fields, and there pour out their Souls in hearty Prayers to God. And that none might pretend their own Inability to the Duty, he himself composed and gave them a short *Form of Prayer*, which he enjoined them to make use of every Lord's-day. So careful was he, that this Day should not be *dishonoured* or *misimployed*, even by those who were yet *Strangers* and *Enemies* to *Christianity*. He moreover ordained, That there should be no *Courts of Judicature* open upon this Day, no *Suits* or *Trials at Law*, but that for any Works of Mercy, such as the *emancipating* and setting free of Slaves or Servants, this might be done. That there should be no Suits or demanding Debts upon this Day, was confirmed by several Laws of succeeding Emperors; and that no *Arbitrators*, who had the Umpirage of any Business lying before them, should at that time have power to determine or take up litigious Causes, Penalties being entailed upon any that transgressed herein. *Theodosius* the Great (*An.* 386.) by a second Law ratified one which he had passed long before, wherein he expresly prohibited

Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. *c.* 18, 19, 20. *p.* 534.

Cod. Just. l. 3. *tit.* 12. *de feriis, l.* 3.

Cod. Theod. l. 2. *tit.* 8. *de feriis, l.* 1. *lib.* 1. *tit.* 8. *l.* 3.

Ib. l. 15. *tit.* 4. *de spectac. l.* 2.

hibited all publick *Shews* upon the Lord's-day, that the Worship of God might not be confounded with those prophane Solemnities. This Law the younger *Theodosius*, some few Years after, confirmed and enlarged, enacting, That on the Lord's-day (and some other Festivals there mentioned) not only *Christians*, but even *Jews* and *Heathens* should be restrained from the Pleasure of all *Sights* and *Spectacles*, and the *Theatres* be shut up in every place. And whereas it might so happen, that the *Birth-day* or *Inauguration* of the Emperor might fall upon that Day, therefore to let the People know, how infinitely he preferred the Honour of God before the Concerns of his own Majesty and Greatness, he commanded, That if it should so happen, that then the imperial Solemnity should be put off, and deferred till another Day.

Chap. 7.

Ib. Leg. 5. *Domincio.*

I shall take notice but of one Instance more of their great Observance of this Day, and that was their constant *Attendance* upon the Solemnities of publick Worship. They did not think it enough to read, and pray, and praise God at *Home*, but made Conscience of appearing in the *publick* Assemblies, from which nothing but Sickness and absolute Necessity did detain them: And if sick, or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing troubled them more, than that they could not come to Church, and join their Devotions to the common Services. If Persecution at any time forced them to keep a little close, yet no sooner was there the least Mitigation, but they presently returned to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. No trivial Pretences, no light Excuses were then admitted for any one's absence from the Congregation; but according to the merit of the Cause, severe Censures were passed upon them. The Synod of *Illiberis* provided, That if any Man dwelling in a City (where usually Churches

Part. I. were neareſt at hand) ſhould for three *Lord's-days* abſent himſelf from the Church, he ſhould for ſome time be ſuſpended the Communion, that he might appear to be corrected for his Fault. They allowed no ſeparate Aſſemblies, no Congregations but what met in the publick Church. If any Man took upon him to make a Breach, and to draw People into Corners, he was preſently condemned, and a ſuitable Penalty put upon him. When *Euſtathius* Biſhop of *Sebaſtia* (a Man pretending to great Strictneſs and Auſterity of Life) began to caſt off the Diſcipline of the Church, and to introduce many odd Obſervations of his own; amongſt others, to condemn Prieſts that were married, to faſt on the Lord's-day, and to keep Meetings in private Houſes, drawing away many, but eſpecially *Women* (as the Hiſtorian obſerves) who, leaving their Husbands, were led away with Error, and from that into great Filthineſs and Impurity: No ſooner did the Biſhops of thoſe Parts diſcover it, but meeting in Council at *Gangra*, the *Metropolis* of *Paphlagonia*, about the year 340, they condemned and caſt them out of the Church, paſſing theſe two *Canons* amongſt the reſt; *If any one ſhall teach that the Houſe of God is to be deſpiſed, and the Aſſemblies that are held in it, let him be accurſed. If any ſhall take upon him out of the Church privately to preach at home, and making light of the Church, ſhall do thoſe things that belong only to the Church, without the Preſence of the Prieſts, and the Leave and Allowance of the Biſhop, let him be accurſed.* Correſpondent to which, the *Canons* called *Apoſtolical*, and the Council of *Antioch* ordain, That if any *Presbyter*, ſetting light by his own *Biſhop*, ſhall withdraw and ſet up *ſeparate* Meetings, and erect another *Altar* (*i. e.* ſays *Zonaras*, keep unlawful Conventicles, preach privately, and adminiſter the Sacrament) that in ſuch a caſe he ſhall be *depoſed*, as ambitious

Can. 21. *p.* 28.

Soz. l. 3. *c.* 14. *p.* 521.

Concil. Gangr. Can. 4, 5.

Can. 31. *Conc. Antioch, Can.* 5.

bitious and tyrannical, and the People communicating with him be *excommunicate*, as being factious and schismatical; only this not to be done till after the third Admonition. After all that has been said, I might farther shew what Esteem and Value the first Christians had of the Lord's-day, by those great and honourable things they have spoken concerning it, of which I'll produce but two Passages; the one is, that in the Epistle *ad Magnesios*, which, if not *Ignatius*'s, must yet be acknowledged an antient Author: *Let every one* (says he) *that loves Christ keep the Lord's-day Festival, the Resurrection-day, the Queen and Empress of all Days, in which our Life was raised again, and Death conquered by our Lord and Saviour.* The other that of *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, who speaks thus; *That both Custom and Reason challenge from us that we should honour the Lord's-day, and keep it Festival, seeing on that Day it was that our Lord Jesus Christ compleated his Resurrection from the Dead.*

Chap. 7.

Pag. 149.

Edict. Theoph. apud Balsam. in Synod. tom. 2. par. 1. p. 170.

Next to the Lord's-day, the *Sabbath* or *Saturday* (for so the word *Sabbatum* is constantly used in the Writings of the Fathers, when speaking of it as it relates to Christians) was held by them in great veneration; and especially in the *Eastern* Parts, honoured with all the publick Solemnities of Religion. For which we are to know, That the Gospel in those Parts mainly prevailing amongst the *Jews*, they being generally the first Converts to the *Christian* Faith, they still retained a mighty Reverence for the *Mosaick* Institutions, and especially for the *Sabbath*, as that which had been appointed by God himself (as the Memorial of his Rest from the Work of Creation) settled by their great Master *Moses*, and celebrated by their Ancestors for so many Ages, as the Solemn Day of their Publick Worship; and were therefore very loth that it should be wholly antiqua-

Part I. ted and laid aſide. For this reaſon it ſeemed good to the Prudence of thoſe times (as in others of the *Jewiſh* Rites, ſo in this) to indulge the Humour of that people, and to keep the Sabbath as a Day for religious Offices. Hence they uſually had moſt parts of Divine Service performed upon that Day; they met together for Publick Prayers, for reading the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacraments, and ſuch like Duties. This is plain, not only from ſome Paſſages in *Ignatius* and *Clemens*'s Conſtitutions, but alſo from Writers of more unqueſtionable Credit and Authority. *Athanaſius*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, tells us, that they aſſembled on Saturdays, not that they were infected with *Judaiſm*; but only to worſhip *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Lord of the Sabbath: and *Socrates* ſpeaking of the uſual times of their Publick Meeting, calls the Sabbath and the Lord's-day, the Weekly Feſtivals, on which the Congregation was wont to meet in the Church for the Performance of Divine Services. Therefore the Council of *Laodicea*, amongſt other things, decreed, That upon *Saturdays* the Goſpels and other Scriptures ſhould be read, that in *Lent* the Euchariſt ſhould not be celebrated but upon *Saturday* and the *Lord's-day*; and upon thoſe Days only, in the time of *Lent*, it ſhould be lawful to commemorate and rehearſe the Names of Martyrs. Upon this Day alſo, as well as upon *Sunday*, all *Faſts* were ſeverely prohibited (an infallible Argument they counted it a Feſtival-day) one *Saturday* in the Year only excepted, *viz.* that before *Eaſter-day*, which was always obſerved as a Solemn Faſt: Things ſo commonly known, as to need no Proof. But though the Church thought fit thus far to correſpond with the *Jewiſh* Converts, as ſolemnly to obſerve the Sabbath; yet to take away all Offence, and to vindicate themſelves from Compliance with *Judaiſm*, they openly declared, That they did it only in a *Chriſtian*

Homil. de Sement. in init.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. p. 312.

Can. 16. 41---51.

Chriſtian way, and kept it not as a *Jewiſh Sabbath*, as is expreſly affirmed by *Athanaſius*, *Nazianzen*, and others: and the forementioned *Laodicean* Synod has a *Canon* to this purpoſe; *That Chriſtians ſhould not* Judaize, *and reſt from all Labour on the Sabbath, but follow their ordinary Works (i. e.* ſo far as conſiſted with their Attendance upon the Publick Aſſemblies) *and ſhould not entertain ſuch Thoughts of it, but that ſtill they ſhould prefer the Lord's-day before it, and on that Day reſt as* Chriſtians: *But if any were found to* Judaize, *they ſhould be accurſed.* Chap. 7.

Athanaſ. Homil. de Sement. to. 1. p. 835. Can. 29.

Thus ſtood the Caſe in the *Eaſtern* Church; in thoſe in the *Weſt* we find it ſomewhat different. Amongſt them it was not obſerved as a Religious *Feſtival*, but kept as a conſtant *Faſt*. The reaſon whereof (as 'tis given by Pope *Innocent* in an Epiſtle to the Biſhop of *Eugubium*, where he treats of this very caſe) ſeems moſt probable: If *(ſays he)* we commemorate Chriſt's Reſurrection not only at *Eaſter*, but every *Lord's-day*, and faſt upon *Friday*, becauſe 'twas the Day of his Paſſion, we ought not to paſs by *Saturday*, which is the middle time between the Days of Grief and Joy; the Apoſtles themſelves ſpending thoſe two Days *(viz. Friday* and the *Sabbath)* in great Sorrow and Heavineſs: And he thinks no doubt ought to be made, but that the Apoſtles faſted upon thoſe two Days; whence the Church had a *Tradition*, That the Sacraments were not to be adminiſtred on thoſe Days: and therefore concludes, that every *Saturday*, or *Sabbath*, ought to be kept a Faſt. To the ſame purpoſe the Council of *Illiberis* ordained, That a *Saturday*-Feſtival was an Error that ought to be reformed, and that Men ought to faſt upon every Sabbath. But though this ſeems to have been the general Practice, yet it did not obtain in all Places of the *Weſt* alike. In *Italy* it ſelf 'twas otherwiſe at *Milan*; where

Innocent. Ep. ad Decium Eugubin. c. 4. Sabbato vero. Can. 36. p. 35.

Saturday

Part I.

Saturday was a Feſtival; and 'tis ſaid in the Life of St. *Ambroſe*, who was Biſhop of that See, That he conſtantly dined as well upon *Saturday* as the Lord's-day (it being his cuſtom to dine upon no other Days but thoſe, and the Memorials of the Martyrs) and uſed alſo upon that Day to preach to the People: though ſo great was the Prudence and Moderation of that good Man, that he bound not up himſelf in theſe indifferent things; but when he was at *Milan* he dined upon *Saturdays*, and when he was at *Rome* he faſted as they did upon thoſe Days. This St. *Auguſtine* aſſures us he had from his own Mouth: for when his Mother *Monica* came after him to *Milan* (where he then reſided) ſhe was greatly troubled to find the *Saturday*-Faſt not kept there as ſhe had found it in other Places. For her Satisfaction he immediately went to conſult St. *Ambroſe*, then Biſhop of that Place, who told him, he could give him no better Advice in the caſe, than to do as he did: *When I come to* Rome (ſaid he) *I faſt on the* Saturday *as they do at* Rome, *when I am here I do not faſt. So likewiſe you, to whatſoever Church you come, obſerve the cuſtom of that Place, if you mean not either to give or take Offence.* With this Anſwer he ſatisfied his Mother, and ever after when he thought of it, looked upon it as an *Oracle* ſent from *Heaven*. So that even in *Italy* the *Saturday*-Faſt was not univerſally obſerved. Nay, a very *learned Man* (and a Biſhop of the *Roman* Church) thinks it highly probable, That for the firſt Ages eſpecially, *Saturday* was no more kept as a Faſt at *Rome*, than in the Churches of the *Eaſt*: Tho the great Argument whereby he would eſtabliſh it *(viz.)* becauſe ſome *Latin* Churches, who muſt needs follow the Pattern of the Church of *Rome*, did not keep it ſo, is very infirm and weak; and needs no more than that very Inſtance of the Church of *Milan* to refute it, which

Paulin. in vit. Amb. operibus Ambroſ. præfix.

Ad Januar. Epiſt. 118. *col.* 557. *com.* 2.

Albaſp. de vet. Eccl. rit. obſ. 13. *p.* 90.

which, though under the *Pope's* Nose, did not yet keep that Day as a Fast, although this was many Years after it had been so established and observed at *Rome*. Chap. 7.

And now that I am got into this Business, I shall once for all dispatch the matter about their *Fasts*, before I proceed to their other Festivals. 'Tis certain, the antient Christians had two sorts of solemn Fasts, *weekly and annual*. Their *weekly* Fast (called *jejunia quartæ & sextæ feriæ*) were kept on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, appointed so, as we are told, for this reason, because on *Wednesday* our Lord was betrayed by *Judas*, on *Friday* he was crucified by the *Jews*. This Custom *Epiphanius* (how truly I know not) refers to the Apostles, and elsewhere tells us, that those Days were observed as Fasts through the whole World. These Fasts they called their *Stations* (not because they *stood* all the while, but by an Allusion to the *military Stations*, and keeping their Guards, as *Tertullian* observes, they kept close at it) and they usually lasted ἕως ὥρας ἐννάτης, as *Epiphanius* informs us, *till the ninth Hour*, *i. e.* till three of the Clock in the Afternoon; at which time having ended their Fast-Devotions, they received the *Eucharist*, and then broke up the Station, and went home: whence it is that *Tertullian* calls them, *stationum semijejunia*, the *half Fasts of Stations*. And he seems to censure the Practice of some, who having privately resolved upon an entire Fast of the whole Day, refused to receive the *Eucharist* at the publick Stationary Fasts, because they thought that by eating and drinking the Sacramental Elements, they put a period to their Fasting: For it was usual in those times with many, after the Stationary Fast was ended, to continue and hold on the Fast until the Evening. The Historian tells us, That it had been a very antient Custom in the Church of *Alexandria*, upon those Days to have the

Vid Constit. Ap. l. 5. c. 14. p. 929. l. 7. c. 24. p. 978. Serm. Compen. p. 465. Hæres. 85. p. 387. De Orat. c. 14. p. 136. Serm. Compend. de fid. p. 466. De jejun. c. 13. p. 551. De Orat. c. 14. p. 135.

Vid. de jejun. p. 545. A. p. 544. B.

Socrat. l. 5. c. 22. p. 28.

Part I. the Scriptures read and expounded, and all other Parts of Divine Service, except the Celebration of the Sacrament; and that it was chiefly in those days that *Origen* was wont to teach the People. Whether the omitting of the Sacrament then might be a peculiar Custom to that Church, I know not; certain I am, 'twas upon those days administred in other places. So St. *Basil*, enumerating the times how oft they received it every Week, expresly puts *Wednesday* and *Friday* into the Number. The Remains of these *primitive Stations* are yet observed in our *Church* at this day, which by her 15*th Canon* has ordained, *That tho* Wednesdays *and* Fridays *be not Holy Days, yet that weekly upon those times* Minister *and* People *shall resort to Church at the accustomed Hours of Prayer.*

Tom. 3. *Epist.* 289. *p.* 279.

Their *Annual* Fast was that of *Lent*, by way of preparation to the Feast of our Saviour's Resurrection: this (though not in the modern use of it) was very antient, though far from being an *Apostolical Canon*, as a *learned Prelate* of our Church has fully proved. From the very first Age of the Christian Church, 'twas customary to fast before *Easter*; but for how long, it was variously observed according to different Times and Places; some fasting so many Days, others so many Weeks, and some so many Days on each Week: and 'tis most probably thought that it was at first stiled τεσσαρακοστὴ, or *Quadrageſima*, not because 'twas a Fast of *forty Days*, but of *forty Hours*, begun about twelve on *Friday* (the time of our Saviour's falling under the Power of Death) and continued till *Sunday-morning*, the time of his rising from the Dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more Days, and then Weeks, till it came to three, and at last to six or seven Weeks. But concerning the different Observations of it in several Places, let them who desire to know more, consult *Socrates* and *Sozomen*,

Bp Taylor Duct. Dub. lib. 3. *c.* 4. *p.* 629.

Id. ib. vid. Thorndike rel. assembl. c. 8. *p.* 276.

Chap. 7.

men, who both ſpeak enough about it. This *Quadrageſimal* Faſt was kept in thoſe times with great Piety and Religion, people generally applying themſelves with all ſeriouſneſs to Acts of Penance and Mortification; whence *Chryſoſtom* calls *Lent* the Remedy and *Phyſick* of our Souls: and to the end that the obſervation of it might be more grave and ſolemn, *Theodoſius M.* and his Collegue Emperors paſſed two Laws, that during the time of *Lent* all Proceſs and Inquiry into criminal actions ſhould be ſuſpended, and no corporal Puniſhments inflicted upon any; it being unfit (as the ſecond of thoſe Laws expreſſes it) that in the holy time of *Lent* the *Body* ſhould ſuffer puniſhment, while the *Soul* is expecting abſolution. But with what care ſoever they kept the preceding parts, 'tis certain they kept the cloſe of it with a mighty Strictneſs and Auſterity, I mean the laſt week of it, that which immediately preceded the Feaſt of *Eaſter*; this they conſecrated to more peculiar acts of Prayer, Abſtinence and Devotion: and whereas in the other parts of *Lent* they ended their Faſt in the evening, in this they extended it to the Cock-crowing, or firſt glimpſe of the Morning. To be ſure they ended it not before Midnight, for to break up the Faſt before that time, was accounted a piece of great Prophaneneſs and Intemperance, as *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria* determines in a Letter to *Baſilides*, wherein he largely and learnedly ſtates the caſe. This was the *Hebdomada magna*, the *great* (or *holy*) Week; ſo called (ſays *Chryſoſtom*) not that it has either more *Hours* or *Days* in it than other Weeks, but becauſe this is the Week in which *truly great* and ineffable good things were purchaſed for us: within this time Death was conquered, the Curſe deſtroyed, the Devil's Tyranny diſſolved, his Inſtruments broken, Heaven opened, Angels rejoiced, the Partition-wall broken down, and God

Socrat. l. 5. c. 22. Soz. l. 7. c. 19.

Hom. 1. in Gen. tom. 2. p. 1.

Cod. Theod. lib. 9 Tit. 35. de Queſtion. 4 & 5.

Conſtit. Apoſt. l. 5. c. 17, 18. p. 932. Epiphan. λογ. σύντομ., p. 466.

Apud. Zonar. in Synod. Tom. 2. part 1. p. 1.

Hom. 30. in Gen. p. 328.

Part I. God and Man reconciled. For this cauſe we call it the *great Week*, for this cauſe Men faſt, and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater honour to it: The Emperors themſelves, to ſhew what Veneration they have for this time, commanding all ſuits and Proceſſes at Law to ceaſe, Tribunal-doors to be ſhut up, and Priſoners to be ſet free; imitating herein their great Lord and Maſter, who by his death at this time delivered us from the Priſon and the Chains of Sin: meaning herein thoſe Laws of *Theodoſius*, *Gratian*, and *Valentinian*, which we lately mention'd.

We proceed now to enquire what other Feſtivals there were in thoſe firſt Ages of the Church, which I find to be chiefly theſe: *Eaſter*, *Whitſuntide*, and *Epiphany*, which comprehend two, *Chriſtmas* and *Epiphany*, properly ſo called. I reckon them not in their proper order, but as I ſuppoſe them to have taken place in the Church; of theſe *Eaſter* challenges the precedence, both for its Antiquity and the great ſtir about it. That in and from the very times of the Apoſtles (beſides the weekly Return of the Lord's Day) there has been always obſerved an *Anniverſary* Feſtival in memory of *Chriſt's Reſurrection*, no Man can doubt, that has any inſight into the Affairs of the antient Church; all the diſpute was about the particular time when it was to be kept, which became the matter of as famous a Controverſy as any that in thoſe Ages exerciſed the Chriſtian World. The ſtate of the caſe was briefly this; The Churches of *Aſia* the leſs, kept their *Eaſter* upon the ſame Day whereon the *Jews* celebrated their *Paſſover*, *viz.* upon the firſt Day of the firſt Month (which always began with the appearance of the Moon) moſtly anſwering to our *March*; and this they did, upon what Day of the Week ſoever it fell, and hence were ſtiled *Quartodecimans*, becauſe keeping Eaſter *quarta decima Luna*, upon the 14 Day after the

φάσις,

φάσις, or appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this Custom, but kept *Easter* upon the Lord's-Day following the Day of the Jewish Passover; partly the more to honour the Day, and partly to distinguish between *Jews* and *Christians*. The *Asiaticks* pleaded for themselves the practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that Day, together with St. *John* and the rest of the Apostles; as *Irenæus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing, though himself was on the other side. And *Polycrates* in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in St. *John* but St. *Philip* the Apostle, who himself and his whole Family used so to keep it; from whom it had been conveyed down in a constant and uninterrupted observance through all the Bishops of those Places, some whereof he there enumerates, and tells us, That Seven Bishops of that place in a constant Succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eighth, and that it had never been kept by them upon any other Day. This we are not so to understand, as if St. *John* and the Apostles had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon that Day; but rather that they did it by way of *Condescension*, accommodating their practice, in a matter indifferent, to the humour of the *Jewish* Converts (whose number in those Parts was very great) as they had done before in several other cases, and particularly in observing the *Sabbath* or *Saturday*. The other Churches also (says *Eusebius*) had for their patronage an *Apostolical Tradition*, or at least pretended it; and were the much more numerous party. This difference was the spring of great bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of *Rome* stickled hard to impose their Customs upon

Chap. 7.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. *c.* 24. *p.* 193.

Ibid. p. 191.

Ib. c. 23. *p.* 190.

Part I. God and Man reconciled. For this cauſe we call it the *great Week*, for this cauſe Men faſt, and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater honour to it: The Emperors themſelves, to ſhew what Veneration they have for this time, commanding all ſuits and Proceſſes at Law to ceaſe, Tribunal-doors to be ſhut up, and Priſoners to be ſet free; imitating herein their great Lord and Maſter, who by his death at this time delivered us from the Priſon and the Chains of Sin: meaning herein thoſe Laws of *Theodoſius*, *Gratian*, and *Valentinian*, which we lately mention'd.

We proceed now to enquire what other Feſtivals there were in thoſe firſt Ages of the Church, which I find to be chiefly theſe: *Eaſter*, *Whitſuntide*, and *Epiphany*, which comprehend two, *Chriſtmas* and *Epiphany*, properly ſo called. I reckon them not in their proper order, but as I ſuppoſe them to have taken place in the Church; of theſe *Eaſter* challenges the precedence, both for its Antiquity and the great ſtir about it. That in and from the very times of the Apoſtles (beſides the weekly Return of the Lord's Day) there has been always obſerved an *Anniverſary* Feſtival in memory of *Chriſt's Reſurrection*, no Man can doubt, that has any inſight into the Affairs of the antient Church; all the diſpute was about the particular time when it was to be kept, which became the matter of as famous a Controverſy as any that in thoſe Ages exerciſed the Chriſtian World. The ſtate of the caſe was briefly this; The Churches of *Aſia* the leſs, kept their *Eaſter* upon the ſame Day whereon the *Jews* celebrated their *Paſſover*, *viz.* upon the firſt Day of the firſt Month (which always began with the appearance of the Moon) moſtly anſwering to our *March*; and this they did, upon what Day of the Week ſoever it fell, and hence were ſtiled *Quartodecimans*, becauſe keeping Eaſter *quarta decima Luna*, upon the 14 Day after the

φάσις,

φάσις, or appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this Custom, but kept *Easter* upon the Lord's-Day following the Day of the Jewish Passover; partly the more to honour the Day, and partly to distinguish between *Jews* and *Christians*. The *Asiaticks* pleaded for themselves the practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that Day, together with St. *John* and the rest of the Apostles; as *Irenæus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing, though himself was on the other side. And *Polycrates* in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in St. *John* but St. *Philip* the Apostle, who himself and his whole Family used so to keep it; from whom it had been conveyed down in a constant and uninterrupted observance through all the Bishops of those Places, some whereof he there enumerates, and tells us, That Seven Bishops of that place in a constant Succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eighth, and that it had never been kept by them upon any other Day. This we are not so to understand, as if St. *John* and the Apostles had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon that Day; but rather that they did it by way of *Condescension*, accommodating their practice, in a matter indifferent, to the humour of the *Jewish* Converts (whose number in those Parts was very great) as they had done before in several other cases, and particularly in observing the *Sabbath* or *Saturday*. The other Churches also (says *Eusebius*) had for their patronage an *Apostolical Tradition*, or at least pretended it; and were the much more numerous party. This difference was the spring of great bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of *Rome* stickled hard to impose their Customs upon

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Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. *c.* 24. *p.* 193.

Ibid. p. 191.

Ib. c. 23. *p.* 190.

Part I. upon the *Eastern* Churches: whereupon *Polycarpus* comes over to *Rome* to confer with *Anicetus*, who was then Bishop, about it; and tho they could not agree the matter, yet they parted fairly. After this, *Pope Victor* renewed the Quarrel, and was so fierce and peremptory in the case, that he either actually did, or (as a learned Man inclines rather to think, probably to mollify the *Odium* of the Fact) severely threatned to excommunicate those *Eastern* Churches for standing out against it. This rash and bold Attempt was ill resented by the sober and moderate Men of his own party, who writ to him about it; and particularly *Irenæus*, (a Man, as *Eusebius* notes, truly answering his *Name*, both in his Temper and his Life *quiet and peaceable)* who gravely reproved him for renting the Peace of the Church, and troubling so many famous Churches for observing the Customs derived to them from their Ancestors; with much more to the same purpose. But the *Asian* Bishops little regarding what was either said or done at *Rome*, still went on in their old course, though by the diligent Practices of the other Party, they lost ground, but yet still made shift to keep the Cause on foot till the time of *Constantine*; who finding the Controversy amongst others much to disquiet the Peace of the Church, did for this and some other Reasons summon the great Council of *Nice*, by whom this Question was solemnly determined, *Easter* ordained to be kept upon one and the same Day throughout the World, not according to the Custom of the *Jews*, but upon the *Lord's-day*; and this Decree ratified and published by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches.

Id l. 4. c. 14. p. 127.

H. Vales. Annal. in Euseb. l. 5. c. 24. p. 105. col. 1.

Euseb. de vit. Constant l. 3, c. 14, 17.

The Eves, or *Vigils* of this Festival were wont to be celebrated with more than ordinary Pomp, with solemn watchings, with multitudes of lighted *Torches*, both in the Churches, and their own private Houses,

Naz. Or. 2. in Pasch. Orat. 42. p. 676.

Houſes, ſo as to turn the Night it ſelf into Day, and with the general reſort and confluence of all ranks of Men, both Magiſtrates and People. This cuſtom of Lights at that time was, if not begun, at leaſt much augmented by *Conſtantine*, who ſet up Lamps and Torches in all places, as well within the Church as without; that through the whole City the night ſeemed to outvye the Sun at Noon-day. And this they did (as *Nazianzen* intimates) as a *Prodromus* or Forerunner of that great Light, even the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, which the next day aroſe upon the World. For the *Feaſt* it ſelf, the ſame Father calls it the holy and famous *Paſſover*, a day which is the *Queen* of days, the *Feſtival* of *Feſtivals*, and which as far excels all others, even of thoſe which are inſtituted to the Honour of *Chriſt*, as the *Sun* goes beyond the other *Stars*. A time it was famous for works of *Mercy* and *Charity*, every one both of *Clergy* and *Laity* ſtriving to contribute liberally to the Poor; a Duty (as one of the *Antients* obſerves) very congruous and ſuitable to that happy ſeaſon: for what more fit, than that ſuch as beg relief ſhould be enabled to rejoice at that time, when we remember the common Fountain of our Mercies? Therefore no ſooner did the morning of this day appear, but *Conſtantine* uſed to ariſe, and in imitation of the love and kindneſs of our bleſſed *Saviour*, to beſtow the richeſt and moſt noble Gifts, and to diffuſe the influences of his Bounty over all parts of his Empire. And his Example herein, it ſeems, was followed by moſt of his Succeſſors, who uſed upon this ſolemnity by their Imperial Orders to releaſe all *Priſoners*, unleſs ſuch as were there for more heavy and notorious Crimes, High Treaſon, Murders, Rapes, Inceſt, and the like. And *Chryſoſtom* tells us of a Letter of *Theodoſius* the Great, ſent at this time throughout the Empire, wherein he did not only command, that

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Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. l. 4. c. 22. p. 536.

Ibid. p. 677.

Ibid. & Orat. 19. p. 304.

Commod. inſtruction. c. 75. p. 57.

Euſeb. ut ſupra.

Hom. 20. ad pop. Antioch, p 230. tom. 1.

Part I. all Prisoners should be releas'd and pardoned, but wish'd he was able to recal those that were already executed, and to restore them to Life again. And because by the negligence and remissness of Messengers, or any accident, those Imperial Letters might sometimes happen to come too late, therefore *Valentinian* the younger provided by a standing Law, That whether order came or not, the Judges should dispense the accustomed Indulgence, and upon *Easter*-Day in the morning cause all Prisons to be open'd, the Chains to be knock'd off, and the Persons set at Liberty.

Lib. 9. *Theod. tit.* 38. *de indulg. l.* 8.

The next Feast considerable in those Primitive Times, was that of *WHIT-SUNDAY*, or *Pentecost*; a Feast of great eminency amongst the *Jews*, in memory of the Law deliver'd on Mount *Sinai* at that time, and for the gathering and bringing in of their *Harvest*; and of no less note amongst *Christians*, for the *Holy Ghost's* descending upon the *Apostles* and other Christians, in the visible appearance of *fiery cloven Tongues*, which happened upon that Day, and those miraculous Powers that were conferred upon them. It was observed with the same respect to *Easter*, that the *Jews* did with respect to their *Passover*, *viz.* (as the word imports) just *fifty days* after it, reckoning from the second Day of that Festival. It seems to some to have commenced from the first rise of Christianity, not only because the *Apostles* and the Church were assembled upon that Day; but because St. *Paul* made so much haste to be at *Jerusalem* the Day of *Pentecost*, which they understand of his great desire to keep it there as a *Christian Feast*. But the Argument seems to me no way conclusive; for the Apostle might desire to be there at that time, both because he was sure to meet with a great number of the Brethren, and because he should have a fitter Opportunity to preach the Gospel to the

Act. 20. 16.

the *Jews*, who from all parts flock'd thither, to the Feast, as our Saviour himself for the same reason used to go up to *Jerusalem* at all their great and solemn Feasts. But however this was, 'tis certain the Observation of it is antient; 'twas mention'd by *Irenæus*, in a Book which he wrote concerning *Easter*, as the Author of the *Questions* and *Responses* in *J. Martyr* tells us, by *Tertullian*, and after him by *Origen* more than once. This Feast is by us stiled *Whitsunday*, partly because of those vast Diffusions of *Light* and *Knowledg* which upon this Day were shed upon the *Apostles*, in order to the *enlightning* of the World; but principally because this (as also *Easter*) being the stated time for *Baptism* in the antient Church, those who were baptized put on *white Garments*, in token of that *pure* and *innocent* course of Life they had now engaged in, (of which more in its proper place.) This white Garment they wore till the next *Sunday* after, and then laid it aside; whence the *Octave* or *Sunday* after *Easter* came to be stiled *Dominica in Albis*, the *Sunday in White*; it being then that the new baptized put off their white Garments. We may observe, that in the Writers of those times, the *whole space of fifty Days* between *Easter* and *Whitsunday* goes often under the name of *Pentecost*, and was in a manner accounted Festival, as * *Tertullian* informs us; and the forty third *Canon* of the *Illiberitan* Council seems to intimate. During this whole time Baptism was conferred, all Fasts were suspended and counted unlawful, they prayed standing, as they did every Lord's Day; and at this time read over *the Acts of the Apostles*, wherein their Sufferings and Miracles are recorded, as we learn from a Law of the younger † *Theodosius*, wherein this custom is mentioned, and more plainly from St. *Chrysostom*, who treats of it in an *Homily* on purpose; where he gives this reason why that

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Quest. 115. *Tert. de Idol. c.* 14. *p.* 94. *Adv. Cels. l.* 8. *p.* 392.

* *Tert. de Idol. c.* 14. *Bapt. c.* 19. *de Cor. Mil. c.* 3. *Vid. Max. Taurin. Homil.* 3. *de S. Pentec. p.* 223.

† *Co. Th. l.* 15. *tit.* 5. *l.* 5. *Serm.* 73. *Cur. Act. App. legantur in Pentec. tom.* 5.

Part I. Book, which contain'd those Actions of the Apostles, which were done after *Pentecost*, should yet be read before it, whenas at all other times, those parts of the Gospel were read which were proper to the season; because the Apostles Miracles being the grand *Confirmation* of the Truth of Christ's *Resurrection*, and those Miracles recorded in that Book, it was therefore most proper to be read next to the Feast of the Resurrection.

Epiphany succeeds: This Word was of old promiscuously used, either for the Feast of Christ's *Nativity*, or for that which we now properly call by that Name. Afterwards the Titles became distinct; that of Christ's *Birth* (or, as we now term it, *CHRIST-MAS-DAY*) was call'd γενέθλια the *Nativity*, and Θεοφάνιας the *Appearance, of God in the Flesh*; two Names importing the same thing, as *Nazianzen* notes. For the Antiquity of it, the first Footsteps I find of it are in the second Century, though I doubt not but it might be celebrated before, mentioned by *Theophilus* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, about the time of the Emperor *Commodus*. But if any Credit might be given to the *Decretal* Epistles, it was somewhat elder than that; *Telesphorus*, who lived under *Antoninus Pius*, ordaining Divine Service to be celebrated, and an Angelical Hymn to be sung the Night before the *Nativity* of our *Saviour*. However, that it was kept before the Times of *Constantine*, we have this sad instance: That when the Persecution raged under *Diocletian*, who then kept his Court at *Nicomedia*, amongst other Acts of barbarous Cruelty done there, finding Multitudes of *Christians* young and old met together, in the Temple, upon the day of *Christ's Nativity*, to celebrate that Festival, he commanded the Church-doors to be shut up, and Fire to be put to it; which in a short time reduced them and the Church to Ashes. I shall not dispute whether it

Εἰς τὰ Θεοφάνια, *Orat.* 38. *p.* 613.

Decret. Telesph. sect. Nolle vero. Niceph. H. Eccl. l. 7. *c.* 6. *p.* 446. *Forsan ex Sim. Metaphrast. qui eadem habet in Martyr. Ind. & Dom. apud Sur. ad* 26. *Dec. tom.* 6.

it was always obſerved upon the ſame day that we keep it now, the *twenty fifth of December*: it ſeems probable that for a long time in the *Eaſt* it was kept in *January*, under the name, and at the general time of the *Epiphania*; till receiving more Light in the caſe from the Churches of the *Weſt*, they changed it to this day. Sure I am, St. *Chryſoſtom* in an Homily on purpoſe about this very thing affirms, That it was not above ten years ſince in that Church (*i. e. Antioch*) it began firſt to be obſerved upon that day, and there offers ſeveral reaſons to prove that to be the true day of Chriſt's Nativity. Chap. 7. *Serm.* 31. *to.*5.*p.*417.

The Feaſt of *Epiphany*, properly ſo called, was kept on the *ſixth of January*, and had that name from a threefold *Apparition* or Manifeſtation commemorated upon that day; which all happen'd, though not in the ſame year, yet upon the ſame day of the year. The firſt was the *Appearance* of the *Star*, which guided the wiſe Men to Chriſt. The ſecond was the famous *Appearance* at the *Baptiſm of Chriſt*, when all the Perſons in the Holy *Trinity* did ſenſibly manifeſt themſelves; the *Father* in the *Voice* from Heaven, the *Son* in the River *Jordan*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* in the viſible ſhape of a *Dove*. This was ever accounted a famous Feſtival, and as St. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, was properly call'd *Epiphany*, becauſe he came in a manner into the World *incognito*; but at his Baptiſm openly appeared to be the Son of God, and was ſo declared before the World. At this time it was that by his *going into the River Jordan, he did ſanctify Water to the myſtical waſhing away of Sin*, (as our Church expreſſes it) in memory whereof, *Chryſoſtom* tells us, they uſed in this Solemnity at midnight to draw water, which they looked upon as *conſecrated* this day, and carrying it home to lay it up, where it would remain pure and uncorrupt for a whole year, ſometimes two or three years together; *Hom.*23.*de Bapt. Chriſti,tom.*1.*p.* 278. *Ibid.*

Part I. gether; the Truth whereof must rest upon the Credit of that good Man. The third *Manifestation* commemorated at this time was that of Christ's *Divinity*, which appeared in the first Miracle that he wrought in *turning Water into Wine*; therefore 'twas call'd *Bethphania*, because it was done in the *House*, at that famous Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, which our Saviour honoured with his own presence. All these three Appearances contributed to the Solemnity of this Festival.

But besides these, there was another sort of Festivals in the Primitive Church kept in Commemoration of *Martyrs*. For the understanding of which we are to know, That in those sad and bloody Times, when the Christian Religion triumphed over Persecution, and gained upon the World by nothing more than the constant and resolute Sufferings of its Professors, whom no Threatnings or Torments could baffle out of it; the People generally had a vast reverence for those who suffer'd thus deep in the Cause of *Christianity*, and laid down their Lives for the Confirmation of it. They looked upon *Confessors* and *Martyrs*, as the great *Champions* of their Religion, who *resisted unto Blood*, and died upon the Spot to make good its ground, and to maintain its Honour and Reputation; and therefore thought it very reasonable to do all possible Honour to their Memories, partly that others might be encouraged to the like Patience and Fortitude, and partly that Vertue even in this World might not lose its reward. Hence they were wont once a year to meet at the *Graves of Martyrs*, there solemnly to recite their Sufferings and their Triumphs, to praise their Vertues, and to bless God for their pious Examples, for their holy Lives, and their happy Deaths, for their Palms and Crowns. These Anniversary Solemnities were call'd *Memoriæ Martyrum, the Memories of the Martyrs*; a Title mentioned by *Cyprian*

Cyprian, but certainly much older than his time: and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church, is I think not so exactly known. The first that I remember to have met with, is that of *Polycarp* (whose Martyrdom is plac'd by *Eusebius*, *Anno* 168, under the third Persecution) concerning whose Death and Sufferings the Church of *Smyrna* (of which he was Bishop) giving an account to the Church of *Philomelium*, and especially of the place where they had honourably entomb'd his Bones; they do profess that (so far as the Malice of their Enemies would permit 'em, and they prayed God nothing might hinder it) they would assemble in that place, and celebrate the *Birth-day* of his Martyrdom with Joy and Gladness. Where we may especially observe, That this Solemnity is stiled his *Birth-day*; and indeed so the Primitive Christians used to call the Days of their Death and Passion, (quite contrary to the manner of the *Gentiles*, who kept the *Natalitials* of their famous Men) looking upon these as the true Days of the Nativity, wherein they were freed from this Valley of Tears, these Regions of Death, and *born again* unto the Joys and Happiness of an endless Life. The same account *Origen* gives (if that Book be his, a very antient Author however:) We keep (says he) the Memories of the Saints, of our Ancestors and Friends that die in the Faith, both rejoicing in that Rest which they have obtained, and begging for our selves a pious *Consummation* in the Faith. And we celebrate not the Day of their *Nativity*, as being the *Inlet* to Sorrow and Temptation; but of their *Death*, as the *Period* of their Miseries, and that which sets them beyond the reach of Temptations. And this we do, both *Clergy* and *People* meeting together, inviting the Poor and Needy, and refreshing the Widows and the Orphans; that so our Festival may be, both in respect of them whom we commemorate, the

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Epist. 37. *p.* 51.

Eus. Chron. ad An. 168.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 135.

Expos. in Joh. l. 3. *fol.* 39. *tom.* 2.

Part. I. Memorial of that happy Rest which their departed Souls do enjoy; and is in respect of *us the Odour of* a *sweet Smell* in the sight of God. Under *Constantine* these days were commanded to be observ'd with great care and strictness, enjoining all his *Lieutenants* and Governours of Provinces, to see the *Memorials* of the *Martyrs* duly honoured. And so sacred were they accounted in those days, that it was thought a piece of Prophaneness to be absent from them: Therefore St. *Basil* thought he could not use a more solemn Argument to perswade a certain Bishop to come over to him upon this occasion, than to adjure him by the respect he bore to the *Memories* of the Martyrs, That if he would not do it for his, yet he should for their sakes, towards whom it was unfit he should shew the least disregard. Hence it is that *Libanius* sometimes takes notice of the *Christians* under no other character than this, *Enemies to the Gods*, τὺς περὶ τὺς τάφυς, *that haunt and frequent Tombs and Sepulchers*. For the *time* of these Assemblies, it was commonly *once a year*, *viz.* upon the day of their Martyrdom; for which end they took particular care to keep *Registers* of the days of the Martyrs Passions. So *Cyprian* expresly charges his *Clergy* to note down the days of their Decease, that there might be a Commemoration of them amongst the *Memories* of the Martyrs. *Theodoret* tells us, That in his time they did not thus assemble once or twice, or five times in a year, but kept *frequent* Memorials oftentimes, every day celebrating the Memorials of Martyrs with Hymns and Praises unto God. But I suppose he means it of days appointed to the Memory of *particular* Martyrs, which being then very numerous, their Memorials were distinctly fix'd upon their proper days; the Festival of St. *Peter*, or St. *Paul*, *Thomas*, *Sergius*, *Marcellus*, &c. as he there enumerates them. For the *places*, these Solemnities were kept

De vita Const. l. 4. c. 23. p. 536.

Epist. 336. to. 3 p. 328.

Apologet. pro doctr. sua, p. 592.

Loco supra annot.

De Cur. Græc. affect. Serm. 8. de martyrib. p. 1. c. 121.

kept at first at the *Tombs* where the Martyrs had been buried, which usually were in the *Cœmeteria* or Church-yards, distinct in those times from their places of Publick Worship, and at a great distance from them, as being commonly without the Cities. Here their Burying-places were in large *Cryptæ* or *Grots* under ground, where they celebrated these Memorials, and whither they used to retire for their common Devotions in times of great Persecution, when their Churches were destroyed or taken from them. And therefore when *Æmilian*, the Governor of *Ægypt* under the Reign of *Valerian*, would skrew up the Persecution against *Christians*, he forbad their Meetings, and that they should not so much as assemble in the places which they called their *Church-yards*; the same Privilege which *Maximinus* also had taken from them. By reason of the darkness of these places, and their frequent assembling there in the *night*, to avoid the Fury of their Enemies, they were forced to use *Lights* and *Lamps* in their publick Meetings; but they who make this an Argument to patronize their burning of Lamps and Wax-Candles in their Churches at Noon-day, (as 'tis in all the great Churches of the *Roman* Communion) talk at a strange rate of wild inconsequence. I am sure St. *Hierom*, when charged with it, denied that they used any in the day-time, and never but at night when they rose up to their Night-Devotions. He confesses indeed 'twas otherwise in the *Eastern* Churches, where when the *Gospel* was to be read, they set up Lights as a Token of their *rejoicing* for those happy and glad Tydings that were contained in it, *Light* having been ever used as a Symbol and Representation of *Joy* and *Gladness*; a custom probably not much elder than his time. Afterwards when Christianity prevailed in the World, the Devotion of Christians erected Churches in those places; the Temples of the Mar-

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Euseb. Hist. l. 7. c. 11. p. 258. l. 9. c. 2. p. 349.

Adv. Vigilant. tom. 2. p. 123.

Part I. Martyrs (says *Theodoret*) being *spacious* and *beautiful*, richly and curiously adorned, and shining with great lustre and brightness. These Solemnities, as the same Author informs us, were kept not like the Heathen Festivals, with *Luxury* and *Obscureness*, but with *Devotion* and *Sobriety*, with Divine *Hymns* and Religious *Sermons*, with fervent *Prayers* to God, mixed many times with Sighs and Tears. Here they heard Sermons and Orations, joined in publick Prayers and Praises, received the Holy Sacrament, offered Gifts and Charities for the Poor, recited the Names of the Martyrs then commemorated with their due Elogies and Commendations, and their Vertues propounded to the imitation of the Hearers. For which purpose they had their set *Notaries*, who took the *Acts*, *Sayings*, and *Sufferings* of Martyrs, which were after *compiled* into particular *Treatises*, and were recited in these annual Meetings; and this was the first original of *Martyrologies*, in the Christian Church. From this custom of offering up Prayers, Praises and Alms at those times, it is, that the Fathers speak so often of *Oblations* and *Sacrifices* at the Martyrs Festivals. *Tertullian*, *Often upon an anniversary Day* (says he) *we make Oblations for them that are departed, in memory of the* Natalitia *or Birth-days*; and to the same purpose elsewhere. *As oft* (says Cyprian) *as by an anniversary Commemoration we celebrate the Passion-days of the Martyrs, we always offer Sacrifices for them:* and the same Phrases oft occur in many others of the Fathers. By which 'tis evident, they meant no more than their publick *Prayers*, and offering up *Praises* to God for the Piety and Constancy, and the excellent Examples of their Martyrs, their celebrating the *Eucharist* at these times, as the *Commemoration* of Christ's *Sacrifice*, their Oblation of *Alms* and Charity for the Poor, every one of which truly may, and often is stiled a *Sacrifice* or *Oblation*; and

Ibid.

Vide Const. Ap. l. 8. c. 45. p. 1040.

Vide Epiph. λόγ. σύντομ. περιπ. *p. 466.*

De Cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. De exhort. Castit. p. 523. De monog. p. 531. Epist. 34. p. 48. & Ep. 37.

and are so understood by some of the more moderate even of the *Romish* Church: And with good reason; for that they did not make any real and formal *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* to Martyrs, but only *honour* them as *holy Men*, and *Friends to God*, who for his and our Saviour's Honour and the Truth of Religion, chose to lay down their Lives, I find expressly affirmed by *Theodoret*. Chap. 7. *Rigalt. Obs. ad Cypr. H. Vales. annot. ad Eus. Hist. annot. p. 262. Picharel de missa. p. 103, 107.*

These Festivals being times of Mirth and Gladness, were celebrated with great expressions of Love and Charity to the Poor, and mutual rejoicing with one another. Here they had their συμπόσια, or *Feasts*, every one bringing something to the *common* Banquet, out of which the Poor also had their share. These Feasts at first were very sober and temperate, and such as became the modesty and simplicity of Christians; as we heard before out of *Theodoret*, and is affirmed before him by *Constantine*, in his *Oration* to the *Saints*. But degenerating afterwards into excess and intemperance, they were every where declaim'd against by the Fathers, till they were wholly laid aside. Upon the account of these Feasts, and for the better making provisions for them, we may conceive it was, that *Markets* came to be kept at these times and places; for of such St. *Basil* speaks, ἀγορασία ἐν τοῖς μαρτυρίοις γινομένη, *Markets held at the Memorials and Tombs of Martyrs*: these he condemns as highly *unsutable* to those Solemnities which were only instituted for Prayers and a Commemoration of the Vertues of good Men, for our encouragement and imitation; and that they ought to remember the Severity of our otherwise meek and humble Saviour, who whip'd the *Buyers* and *Sellers* out of the *Temple*, when by their Marketings they had turned *the House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves*. And the truth is, these Anniversary Commemorations, though in their primitive Institution they are highly reasonable and *Cap. 12. p. 585.* *Reg. fus. disput. interro. 40. tom. 2. p. 589.*

Part I. and commendable; yet through the folly and dotage of Men, they were after made to minister to great Superstition and Idolatry: So plain is it, that the best and usefullest things may be corrupted to bad purposes. For hence sprung the Doctrine and Practice of *Prayer and Invocation of Saints*, and their *Intercession* with God, their worshipping of *Reliques*, *Pilgrimages*, and *visiting Churches*, and offering at the *Shrines* of such and such Saints, and such like Superstitious Practices, which in After-Ages over-run so great a part of the Christian Church: things utterly unknown to the Simplicity of those purer and better Times.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Persons constituting the Body of the Church, both People and Ministers.

The People distinguish'd into several Ranks. Catechumens of two Sorts, gradually instructed in the Principles of the Christian Faith. Accounted only Christians at large. The more recondite Mysteries of Christianity concealed from Persons till after Baptism. Three Reasons assigned of it. How long they remained in the State of Catechumens. The several Classes of Penitents, the προσκλαίοντες, ἀκροώμενοι, ὑποπίπτοντες, συνιστάμενοι, *the* πιστοὶ, *or the Faithful. Their particular Stations in the Church. Their great Reverence for the Lord's Supper. The Clergy why called* κλῆρος. *Of two Sorts; the highest Bishops,*

Pres-

Presbyters, and Deacons. Bishops, as superiour to Presbyters, how antient by the most learned Opposers of Episcopacy. Their Office and Privilege what. Chorepiscopi *who; their Power and Privilege above Presbyters. The* περιοδευται *or Visitors in every Dioceſs. Of Metropolitans, what their Power and Authority above ordinary Bishops; their Antiquity. Of Patriarchs, and in what reſpects ſuperiour to Metropolitans and Archbishops. An account of conforming the external Juriſdiction of the Church to the Civil Government of the* Roman *Empire. Presbyters, their Place and Duty. Whether they preached in the Preſence of the Bishop. Deacons, their Inſtitution, Office, Number. The Archdeacon. Of inferiour Orders. The Subdeacon. The* Acolythus. *The Exorciſt. The Reader. The Door-keeper. What the Nature of their ſeveral Places. Ordination to theſe Offices how managed. The People preſent at, and conſenting to the Ordination.* Sacerdotes prædicari, *what. The Chriſtian Diſcipline in this caſe imitated by the Emperor* Severus, *in appointing Civil Officers. Great Trials and Teſtimonials to be had of Perſons to be ordained. Clergy-Men to riſe by degrees. The Age uſually required in thoſe that were to be promoted to the ſeveral Orders. Of Deaconeſſes, their Antiquity, Age, and Office. The great Honour and Reſpect ſhewed to Bishops and Miniſters. Looked upon as Common Parents. Nothing of Moment done without their* Chap. 8.

leave.

leave. Their Welcome, and the Honour done them wherever they came. This made good by several Instances; Bishops invested with Power to determine Civil Controversies. The Plentiful Provision made for them. The great Privileges and Immunities granted by Constantine *and his Successors to the Bishops and Clergy, noted out of the* Theodosian Code.

FROM the Consideration of *Time* and *Place*, we proceed to consider the *PERSONS* that constituted and made up their Religious Assemblies; and they were either the *Body of the People*, or those who were peculiarly *consecrated* and set apart for the Publick Ministrations of Religion. For the Body of the People, we may observe, that as *Christianity* at first generally gain'd admission in great Towns and Cities, so all the *Believers* of that place usually assembled and met together: the Christians also of the neighbouring Villages resorting thither at times of Publick Worship. But Religion increasing apace, the Publick Assembly, especially in the greater Cities, quickly began to be too vast and numerous to be manag'd with any order and conveniency; and therefore they were forced to divide the *Body* into particular *Congregations*, who had their *Pastors* and Spiritual Guides set over them, but still were under the Superintendency and Care of him that was their *President* or *Bishop* of the place. And according as the Church could form and establish its Discipline, the People either according to their *Seniority* and Improvement, or according to the *Quality* of the present Condition they were under, began to be distinguish'd into several Ranks and * *Classes*, which had their distinct places in the Church, and their gradu-

* *Balsam. Zonar. Aristen. in Can. 5. Conc. Neo-Cæsar.*

al

al Admission to the several parts of the Publick Worship. The first were the *CATECHUMENS*; and of these were two sorts, the τελεώτεροι, or more *perfect*, such as had been *Catechumens* of some considerable standing, and were even ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the Reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last part of the first Service. The others were the ἀτελέστεροι, the more rude and *imperfect*, who stood only amongst the *Hearers*, and were to depart the Congregation as soon as the *Lessons* were read: These were as yet accounted *Heathens*, who applied themselves to the Christian Faith, and were *catechized* and instructed in the more plain Grounds and Rudiments of Religion. These Principles were gradually deliver'd to them, according as they became capable to receive them; first the more plain, and then the more difficult. Indeed they were very shy of imparting the Knowledg of the more recondite Doctrines of *Christianity* to any till after Baptism. So St. *Cyril* expresly assures us, where speaking to the *illuminate* or baptized; If during the Catechetical Exercise (says he) a *Catechumen* shall ask thee, what that means which the Preachers say? tell him not, for he is yet without; and these *Mysteries* are deliver'd to thee only. The weak Understanding of a *Catechumen* being no more able to bear such sublime *Mysteries*, than a sick Man's Head can large and immoderate Draughts of Wine. And at the end of his *Preface* he has this note; *These Catechetical Discourses may be read by those that are to be Baptized, or the Faithful already baptized: But to Catechumens, or such as are no Christians, thou may'st not impart them; for if thou dost, expect to give an account to God.*

Chap. 8.

Præf. ad Catech. Illum. p. 13.

Ib. p. 21.

St. *Basil*, discoursing of the Rites and Institutions of Christianity, divides them into two parts, the τὰ κηρύγματα, and the τὰ δόγματα The τὰ κηρύγματα

De Spir. S. c. 27. *p.* 532. *tom.* 2.

were

Part I. were those parts of Religion which might δημοσιευεσθαι, be familiarly Preached and Expounded to the People: The τὰ δόγματα were the more sublime and hidden Doctrines and Parts of the Christian Faith; and these were ἀπόῤῥητα, things not rashly and commonly to be *divulg'd*, but to be lock'd up in silence. Of this nature were the Doctrines of the *Trinity* and *Hypostatick Union*, and such like; especially of the two *Sacraments*, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. For though they acquainted their young Hearers with so much of them as was necessary to stir up their desires, yet as to the main of the things themselves, the Sacramental *Symbols*, the *Manner* of their Celebration, the *Modus* of the Divine Presence at the Holy *Eucharist*, the meaning of all those *Mystical* Rites and Ceremonies that were used about them; these were carefully concealed both from *Strangers* and *Catechumens*, and communicated only to those who were solemnly initiated and baptized. Hence that antient *Form* so common in the Sermons and Writings of the Fathers, whereby, when accidentally discoursing before the People of any of these Mysterious Parts of Religion, they used to fetch themselves off with an ΙΣΑΣΙΝ ΟΙ ΜΕΜΥΘΗΜΕΝΟΙ, *Those that are initiated know what is said.* This was so usual, that this Phrase occurs at least fifty times in the Writings of St. *Chrysostom* only, as *Casaubon* hath observed; who has likewise noted three reasons out of the *Fathers* why they so studiously concealed these Parts of their Religion. *First*, the nature of the things themselves, so sublime and remote from vulgar Apprehensions, that they would signify little to *Pagans* or *Catechumens* not yet fully instructed and confirmed in the *Faith*; and would either be lost upon them, or in danger to be derided by them. *Secondly*, that hereby the *Catechumens* and younger Christians might be inflamed with a greater Eagerness of

Vid. Dion. Areop. de. Eccl. Hierarch. c. 1. p. 230.

Chrys. Hom. 67. *in Gen. p.* 719. *tom.* 1. *& alibi sæpiss.*

Isid. Pelus. l. 4. *ep.* 162. *p.* 82. *aliique.*

Exercit. 16. *ad Annal. Bar. S.* 43. *p.* 556.

of desire to partake of the Mysteries and Privileges of the *Faithful*; Human Nature being desirous of nothing more than the Knowledg of what is kept and concealed from us. To help them forward in this, St. *Augustine* tells us, that in their publick Prayers they were wont to beg of God to inspire the *Catechumens* with a desire of baptismal Regeneration. The same Account *Chrysostom* gives us, this being part of the Form used in their publick Service, *Let us pray that the most gracious and merciful God would hear the Prayers of the Catechumens:* And what it was they prayed for, he presently adds, *viz. That they might no longer remain in that State.* Upon these accounts, *Initiation* by Baptism, but especially *Admission* to the Lord's-Supper, is, amongst other Titles in the Writers of those Times, called *Desiderata*, because so earnesty desired and sought for by those that were not yet taken in. The truth is, till Persons arrived at this State they were not accounted *Christians* (or but in a large sense, as *Candidates* that stood in order to it;) and therefore could not satisfy themselves either to *live* or *die* in that Condition, wherein they wanted the great *Seals* and *Pledges* of their Christianity. *Thirdly*, to beget in Mens Minds the higher Esteem and Veneration for these religious Mysteries; nothing producing a greater *Contempt* even in sacred things, than too much Openness and Familiarity. So that a little Obscurity and Concealment might seem necessary to vindicate them from Contempt, and secure the Majesty and Reverence that was due to them. This made the *Fathers* and *Seniors* of the Church (says St. *Basil*) in prescribing Rites and Laws, leave many things in the dark, behind the Veil and Curtain, that they might τὸ σεμνὸν τοῖς μυστηίοις φυλάττειν, preserve the *Sacredness* and *Dignity* that was due to the Mysteries of Religion. For a thing (says he) cannot properly be said to be a *Mystery*, when 'tis

Chap. 8.

Ad vital. ep. 107. *col.* 493.

Hom. 2. *in cap.* 11. *ad Cor.* p. 740.

Vid. Chrys. ibid.

Loc. supr. laud.

Part I. once *expoſed* to every vulgar and common Ear. But of this enough, if not too much.

And as they were careful to keep the higher Parts of Chriſtianity within the Cognizance of the *Faithful*, ſo they were not leſs careful to teach and inſtruct the *Catechumens* in all thoſe Principles they were capable of being taught. This at their firſt coming over was done privately, and at home, by Perſons deputed on purpoſe to that Office by the Biſhop (as *Balſamon* clearly intimates) till they were ſufficiently inſtructed in the firſt and more intelligible Principles of the Faith. Then they were admitted into the Congregation, and ſuffered to be preſent at ſome Parts of the Divine Service, eſpecially the *Sermons*, which were made for the building them up unto higher meaſures of Knowledg; which being ended, they were commanded to *depart* the Church, not being ſuffered to be preſent at the more ſolemn Rites, eſpecially the Celebration of the Lord's-Supper. And in this manner they were trained up, till they were initiated by Baptiſm, and taken into the higheſt form of Chriſtians. How long Perſons remained in the State of the *Catechumens*, is difficult to determine; it not being always nor in all Places alike, but longer in ſome, and ſhorter in others, and probably according to the Capacity of the Perſons. The *Apoſtolick Conſtitutions* appoint *three Years* for the *Catechumen* to be inſtructed, but provide withal, that if any one be diligent and virtuous, and have a ripeneſs of Underſtanding for the thing, he may be admitted into Baptiſm ſooner: for (ſay they) not the *Space* of Time, but the *Fitneſs* and *Manners* of Men, are to be regarded in this matter.

In Can. 26. Conc. Laod.

Lib. 8. c. 32. p. 1032.

Epiſt. Canon. περὶ τῶν εἰδωλοθ. φαγ. Can. 11. p. 121.

The next ſort were the *Penitents*, ſuch as for ſome Miſdemeanors were under the Cenſures and Severity of the Church, and were gradually to obtain Abſolution from it. Of theſe there were ſeveral Degrees, five

five especially mentioned by St. *Gregory* of *Neocæsarea*, who lived about the Year 250. The first where the οἱ προσκλαίοντες, such as *wept* and *lamented*, and were rather Candidates to be received into the Orders of *Penitents*, than *Penitents*, properly so called. These usually stood in a squalid and mournful Habit at the *Church-Porch*, with Tears and great Importunity beging of the *Faithful* as they went in, to pray for them. Chap. 8.

The second were the ἀκροώμενοι, the *Hearers*; who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the People. Their *Station* was at the upper end of the *Narthex*, or first Part of the Church, and were to depart the Congregation at the same time with the *Catechumens*. The third *Class* of *Penitents* was that of the ὑποπίπτοντες, the *Prostrate*; because Service being ended, they fell down before the Bishop, who together with the Congregation falling down and making Confession in their behalf, after raised them up and laid his Hands upon them. These stood within the Body of the Church, next the *Pulpit* or *Reading-Pew*, and were to depart together with the *Catechumens*. The fourth were the συνιστάμενοι, the *Consistentes*; such as stayed with the rest of the Congregation, and did not depart with the *Catechumens*, but after they and the other Penitents were gone out, stayed and joined in Prayer and Singing (but not in receiving the Sacrament) with the Faithful. These after some time were advanced into the fifth and last *Order* of the *Communicantes* (μάθεξιν τῶν ἁγιασμάτων, St. *Gregory* calls it) and were admitted to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament. This was the state of the *Penitents* in the Primitive Church. Persons having fully passed through the state of the *Catechumenate*, became then immediate Candidates of Baptism, presented their *Names* to the Bishop, and humbly prostrating themselves, begged that they might be entred into the Church. These were called

Soz. Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 16. p. 727.

Part. I. *Competentes*, because they did *competere gratiam Christi*, sue for the *Grace* of *Christ* conferred in Baptism. The last rank was that of the πιστοὶ, or the *FAITHFUL*; who having been baptized and confirmed, and having approved themselves by the long Train and Course of a strict pious Life, were then admitted to the Participation of the *Lord's-Supper*; which being the highest and most venerable Mystery of the *Christian Religion*, was not then rashly given to any, but to such only as had run through all other Degrees, and by a course of Piety evidenced themselves to be such real and faithful *Christians*, as that the highest Mysteries and most solemn Parts of Religion might be committed to them. This was the highest Order, and looked upon with great regard, and for any of this Rank to lapse and be *overtaken with a Fault*, cost them severer *Penances* than were imposed upon the inferiour Forms of Christians.

This, in short, was the State of the *People*. But because 'tis not possible any Body or Community of Men should be regularly managed without some particular Persons to superintend, direct, and govern the Affairs of the whole Society, therefore we are next to enquire what Persons there were in the Primitive Church, that were peculiarly *set apart* to steer its Affairs, and to attend upon the Publick Offices and Ministrations of it. That God always had a *peculiar* People, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of Mankind, is too evident to need any Proof. Such were the *Patriarchs*, and the *holy Seed* of old: such the *Jews*, chosen by him above all other Nations in the World. This was his κλῆρος, his particular Lot and Portion, comprehending the Body of the People in general. But afterwards this Title was confined to narrower Bounds, and became appropriate to that *Tribe* which God had made choice of to *stand before him*, to wait at his *Altar*, and to minister

minister in the Services of his Worship. And after the *Expiration* of their *Oeconomy*, was accordingly used to denote the *Ministry of the Gospel*, the Persons peculiarly consecrated and devoted to the Service of God in the Christian Church: The Clergy being those, *qui Divino cultui ministeria religionis impendunt* (as they are defined in a Law of the Emperor *Constantine*) who are set apart for the *Ministeries* of Religion in matters relating to the *Divine Worship*. Now the whole κλῆρος & ἱερατικὸς (as 'tis often called in the *Apostles Canons*) the *Roll* of the *Clergy* of the antient Church (taking it within the compass of its first four hundred years) consisted of *two sorts* of Persons, the ἱερωμένοι, who were peculiarly consecrated to the more *proper* and *immediate* Acts of the Worship of God: And the ὑπηρέται, such as were set apart only for the *more mean and common* Services of the Church. Of the first sort were these three, *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*. Chap. 8. *C. Th. l.* 16. *tit.* 3. *de Episc. Eccl. & Cler. l.* 2.

The first and principal Officer of the Church was the President or *BISHOP*, usually chosen out of the *Presbyters*. I shall not here concern my self in the Disputes, whether *Episcopacy*, as a superiour *Order* to *Presbytery*, was of *Divine Institution* (a Controversy sufficiently ventilated in the late Times) it being enough to my purpose, what is acknowledged both by *Blondel* and *Salmasius*, the most learned Defenders of Presbytery, that Bishops were distinct from and superiour to Presbyters in the second *Century*, or the *next Age* to the Apostles. The main Work and Office of a Bishop was to *teach and instruct* the People, to *administer* the Sacraments, to *absolve* Penitents, to *eject and excommunicate* obstinate and incorrigible Offenders, to *preside* in the Assemblies of the Clergy, to *ordain* inferiour Officers in the Church, to *call them to account*, and to *suspend* or deal with them according to the nature of the Offence; to urge

Part I. the *Observance* of Ecclesiastical Laws, and to appoint and institute such indifferent Rites as were for the decent and orderly administration of his Church. In short, according to the Notation of his Name he was a σκόπος, a *Watchman* and *Sentinel*, and therefore obliged ἐπισκοπεῖν, diligently and carefully to *inspect* and observe, to superintend and provide for those that were under his Charge. This, *Zonaras* tells us, was implied in the Bishop's *Throne* being placed on *high*, in the most eminent part of the Church, to denote how much 'twas his Duty from thence to overlook, and very diligently to observe the People that were under him. These and many more were the unquestionable Rights and Duties of the Episcopal Office; which because it was very difficult and troublesome for one Man to discharge, especially where the παροικία, or *Diocess* (as we now call it) was any thing large, therefore upon the multiplying of Country-Churches, it was thought fit to take in a *subordinate* sort of *Bishops*, called *Chorepiscopi*, *Country* or (as amongst us they have been called) *Suffragan* Bishops; whose Business it was to *superintend* and inspect the Churches in the *Country*, that lay more remote from the City where the Episcopal See was, and which the Bishop could not always inspect and oversee in his own Person. These were the *Vicarii Episcoporum* (as they are called in *Isidore*'s Version of the thirteenth *Canon* both of the *Ancyran* and *Neocæsarean Council*) the Bishops *Deputies*, chosen out of the fittest and gravest Persons. In the *Canon* of the last mentioned Council, they are said to be chosen *in imitation* of the Seventy, not the *Seventy Elders* which *Moses* took in to bear part of the Government (as some have *glossed* the Words of that *Canon*) but of the *Seventy Disciples*, whom our Lord made choice of, to send up and down the Countries to preach the Gospel, as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon*

In Can. Apost. Can. 58.

Balsamon understood it: And thereupon, by reason of their great care and pains, are commanded to be esteemed very *honourable*. Their Authority was much greater than that of the *Presbyters*, and yet much inferiour to the *Bishop*. Bishops really they were, though their Power confined within narrow limits; they were not allowed to ordain either *Presbyters* or *Deacons* (unless peculiarly licensed to it by the Bishop of the *Dioceſs*) though they might ordain *Subdeacons*, *Readers*, and any inferior Officers under them. They were to be *assistant* to the Bishop, might be present at *Synods* and *Councils* (to many whereof we find their Subscriptions) and had power to give *Letters of Peace*, *i. e.* such Letters whereby the Bishop of one *Dioceſs* was wont to recommend any of his Clergy to the Bishop of another, that so a fair Understanding and Correspondence might be maintained between them; a Privilege expresly denied to any *Presbyter* whatsoever. But lest this wandring Imployment of the *Chorepiscopi* should reflect any Dishonour upon the Episcopal Office, there were certain *Presbyters* appointed in their room called περιοδευταὶ, or *Visitors*, often mentioned in the antient *Canons* and *Acts* of Councils; who being tied to no certain Place, were to go up and down the Country, to observe and correct what was amiss. And these doubtless were those ἐπιχώριοι Πρεσβύτεροι, (spoken of in the thirteenth *Canon* of the *Neocæsarean* Council) those *rural Presbyters*, who are there forbid to consecrate the *Eucharist* in the *City-Church*, in the presence of the *Bishop* of the *Presbyters* of the City.

Chap. 8.

Conc. Antioch. Can. 10.

Ib. Can. 8.

Conc. Laod. Can. 57.

As Christianity increased and overspread all Parts, and especially the Cities of the Empire, it was found necessary yet farther to enlarge the Episcopal Office; and as there was commonly a Bishop in every *great City*, so in the *Metropolis* (as the *Romans* called it) the *Mother-City* of every *Province* (wherein they had

Part I. Courts of Civil Judicature) there was an *ARCHBISHOP* or a *METROPOLITAN*, who had Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction over all the Churches within that Province. He was ſuperiour to all the Biſhops within thoſe limits; to him it belonged either to *ordain* or to *ratify* the Elections and Ordinations of all the Biſhops within his Province, inſomuch that without his Confirmation they were looked upon as null and void. Once at leaſt every year he was to ſummon the Biſhops under him to a *Synod*, to enquire into and direct the Eccleſiaſtical Affairs within that Province, to inſpect the Lives and Manners, the Opinions and Principles of his Biſhops, to admoniſh, reprove, and ſuſpend them that were diſorderly and irregular: if any Controverſies or Contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the *Hearing* and *Determination* of them; and indeed no matter of *moment* was done within the whole Province, without firſt conſulting him in the caſe. Beſides this *Metropolitan*, there was many times another in the ſame Province, who injoyed nothing but that Name and Title, his *Epiſcopal See* being by the Emperors *Pragmatick* erected into the Dignity of a *Metropolis*. He was only an *Honorary Metropolitan*, without any real Power and Juriſdiction, and had no other Privilege, but that he took place above other ordinary Biſhops; in all things elſe equally ſubject with them to the *Metropolitan* of the Province, as the Council of *Chalcedon* determines in this caſe. When this Office of *Metropolitan* firſt began, I find not; only this we are ſure of, that the Council of *Nice*, ſettling the juſt Rights and Privileges of *Metropolitan Biſhops*, ſpeaks of them as a thing of *antient* Date, uſhering in the *Canon* with an ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατείτω, *Let antient Cuſtoms ſtill take place.* The Original of the *Inſtitution* ſeems to have been partly to comply with Peoples Occaſions, who oft reſorted

Can. 12.

Can. 6.

to

to the *Metropolis* for dispatch of their Affairs, and so might fitly discharge their *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* concerns both at once; and partly because of the great confluence of People to that City: that the Bishop of it might have preheminence above the rest, and the honour of the *Church* bear some proportion to that of the *State*. Chap. 8. *Vid. Conc. Antioch. Can. 9.*

After this sprang up another *Branch* of the Episcopal Office, as much superiour to that of *Metropolitans*, as theirs was to ordinary Bishops; these were called *PRIMATES* and *PATRIARCHS*, and had Jurisdiction over many Provinces. For the understanding of this, it's necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the World, they contrived to model the external Government of the Church, as near as might be to the Civil Government of the *Roman* Empire; the parallel most exactly drawn by an *ingenious* Person of our own Nation; the sum of it is this. The whole Empire of *Rome* was divided into *thirteen Dioceſſes* (so they call'd those divisions) these contained about *one hundred and twenty Provinces*, and every Province several *Cities*. Now as in every City there was a *temporal* Magistrate for the executing of Justice, and keeping the Peace both for that City, and the Towns round about it, so was there also a *Bishop* for spiritual Order and Government, whose Jurisdiction was of like extent and latitude. In every Province there was a *Proconsul* or President, whose Seat was usually at the *Metropolis* or chief City of the Province; and hither all inferiour Cities came for Judgment in matters of Importance. And in proportion to this, there was in the same City an *Archbishop* or *Metropolitan*, for Matters of Eccleſiastical Concernment. Lastly, in every *Dioceſs*, the Emperors had their *Vicarii* or *Lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal City of the *Dioceſs*, where all Imperial *Edicts* were published, and

Edward Breerwood's *Patriarch. Governm. of the ancient Church. Queſt.* 1.

Part I. and from whence they were sent abroad into the several Provinces, and where was the chief *Tribunal* where all Causes, not determinable elsewhere were decided. And to answer this, there was in the same City a *Primate*, to whom the last Determination of all Appeals from all the Provinces in differences of the *Clergy*, and the sovereign Care of all the Dioceſs for sundry Points of spiritual Government did belong. This, in short, is the sum of the Account which that *learned* Man gives of this matter. So that the *Patriarch*, as superiour to the *Metropolitans*, was to have under his Jurisdiction not any one single Province, but a whole *Dioceſs* (in the old *Roman* Notion of that Word) consisting of many *Provinces*. To him belonged the Ordination of all the *Metropolitans* that were under him, as also the summoning them to Councils, the *correcting* and reforming the Misdemeanours they were guilty of; and from his Judgment and Sentence, in things properly within his Cognizance, there lay no Appeal. To this I shall only add what *Salmasius* has noted, that as the *Dioceſs* that was governed by the *Vicarius* had many *Provinces* under it, so the *Præfectus Prætorio* had several *Dioceſſes* under him: And in proportion to this, probable it was, that *Patriarchs* were first brought in, who if not superiour to *Primates* in Jurisdiction and Power, were yet in *Honour*, by reason of the Dignity of those Cities where their *Sees* were fixed, as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch* and *Jerusalem*; a Title and Dignity which they retain to this Day.

The next Office to Bishops was that of *PRESBYTERS*, to whom it belonged to preach to the People, to administer Baptism, consecrate the Eucharist, and to be assistant to the Bishop both in publick Ministrations, and dispatching the Affairs of the Church. The truth is, the *Presbyters* of every great City

City were a kind of *Ecclesiastical Senate*, under the Care and Presidency of the Bishop, whose Counsel and Assistance he made use of in ruling those Societies of Christians that were under his Charge and Government, and were accordingly reckoned next in Place and Power to him: Thus described by St. *Gregory* in his *Iambics*; Chap. 8.

——οἱ τὰ δεύτερα
Θρόνων λελοιχότες,
Λαῷ προέδρους Πρεσβύται,
Σεμνὴ γερουσία.

'Εις ἑαυτόν. Carm. 23. p. 244. Tom. 2.

The venerable Senate of Presbyters, that preside over the People, and possess the second Throne, i. e. the Place next to the Bishop. They are called *Clerici superioris loci*, and otherwhiles (unless we understand it of the *Chorepiscopi*) *Antistites in secundo ordine*; and accordingly in Churches had *Seats* of *Eminency* placed for them next to the Bishop's Throne. Whereby was implied (says *Zonaras*) that they ought to use a proportionable Care and Providence towards the People, to inform and teach them, to direct and guide them, being appointed as *Fellow-labourers* with, and *Assistants* to the Bishop. But though Presbyters by their Ordination had a *Power* conferred upon them to administer Holy Things, yet after that the Church was settled upon Foundations of Order and Regularity, they did not usually exercise this power within any *Dioceſs* without Leave and Authority from the *Bishop*, much less take upon them to preach in his presence. This Custom (however it might be otherwise in the *Eastern* Church) we are sure was constantly observed in the Churches of *Africk* till the time of *Valerius*, St. *Augustine*'s Predecessor in the *See* of *Hippo*: Who being a *Greek*, and by reason of his little skill in the *Latin* Tongue, unable

C. Theod. Leg. 11. Tit. 39. de fid. Test. lib. 10. Sidon. Apoll. lib. 4. Epist. 11. p. 96. In Can. 58. Apost.

Part I. unable to preach to the *Edification* of the People, admitted St. *Auguſtine* (whom he had lately ordained *Presbyter*) to preach before him. Which though at firſt 'twas ill reſented by ſome Biſhops in thoſe parts, yet quickly became a Precedent for other Churches to follow after.

After theſe came *DEACONS:* What the Duty of their Place was, appears from their Primitive E-
Act. 6. lection, the Apoſtles ſetting them apart to *ſerve* or *miniſter to the Tables*, *i. e.* to attend upon and take charge of thoſe daily *Proviſions* that were made for poor indigent Chriſtians; but certainly it implies alſo their being deſtinated to a peculiar Attendance at the Service of the *Lord's Table*. And both theſe may be very well meant in that Place, it being the Cuſtom of Chriſtians then to meet every day at the Lord's Table, where they made their Offerings for the Poor, and when Poor and Rich had their Meals together. And hence it was ever an accounted part of the *Deacon's* Office, as to take care of the Poor, and to diſtribute the Monies given for their Relief and Maintenance; ſo to wait upon the Celebration of the *Euchariſt*, which being conſecrated by the Biſhop, or *Presbyter*, the *Deacon* delivered the Sacramental Elements to the People. Beſides this, they were wont alſo to *preach* and to *baptize*, and were imployed in many parts of the Publick Service, eſpecially in guiding and directing of the People. The number of them in any one Place was uſually reſtrained to *ſeven*; this being the number originally inſtituted by the *Apoſtle*, and which might not be altered, although the City was never ſo *great* and *numerous*, as 'tis in the laſt *Canon* of the *Neocæſarean* Council. As the *Presbyters* were to the *Biſhop*, ſo the *Deacons* were to the *Presbyters*, to be aſſiſtant to them, and to give them all due Reſpect and Reverence. And therefore when ſome of them began to take

take too much upon them, to distribute the Sacrament before the Bishop or Presbyter, and to take place amongst the Presbyters, the Council of *Nice* took notice of it as a piece of bold and saucy Usurpation, severely commanded them to know their Place, and to contain themselves within their own *Bounds* and *Measures*, and neither to meddle with the Sacrament but in their Order, nor to *sit down* before the *Presbyters*, unless it be by their Leave and Command, as 'tis expressed by the *Laodicean* Synod. Accordingly the first Council of *Arles*, forbids the Deacons to do any things of themselves, but to reserve the Honour to the *Presbyters*. Out of the Body of these *Deacons* there was usually one chosen to overlook the rest, the *Arch-Deacon*; an Office supposed to have been of good Antiquity in the Church, and of great Authority, especially in after-times, being generally stiled the *Eye of the Bishop*, to inspect all parts and places of his Dioceses. This was he that in the Church of *Rome* was called the *Cardinal Deacon*, who (as *Onuphrius* tells us) was at first but one, though the number increased afterwards. While Churches were little, and the Services not many, the Deacons themselves were able to discharge them; but as these increased, so did their Labours, and therefore 'twas thought fit to take in some inferiour Offices under them. This gave being to

Chap. 8.

Can. 18.

Can. 20.

Can.. 18.

De Episc. Tit. & Diacon. Cardin. p. 24.

SUB-DEACONS, who were to be assistant to the *Deacon*, as the Deacon to the *Presbyter*, and he to the *Bishop*. One great part of his work was, to wait at the *Church-doors* in the time of Publick Worship, to usher in and to bring out the several Orders of the *Catechumens* and *Penitents*, that none might mistake their proper Stations, and that no Confusion or Disorder might arise to the Disturbance of the Congregation. When he was first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mentioned in an Epistle of the *Roman Clergy* to them of *Carthage*,

Conc. Laodic. Can. 43. *ubi vid. Zon. & Balsam.*

Part I. *thage*, about St. *Cyprian's* Retirement, and elsewhere very often in *Cyprian's* Epistles: Where he also speaks of the *ACOLYTHUS*. What his proper business was, is not so certain; by some his Office is said to have been this, to *Follow* (as the Word implies) or to go along with the Bishop in the Quality of an *honourable* Attendant, to be ready at hand to minister to him, and to be a Companion and Witness of his honest and unblamable Conversation, in case any evil Fame should arise, that might endeavour to blast his Reputation. But by others he is said to have been a *Taper-bearer*, to carry the *Lights* which were set up at reading of the *Gospel*. And this seems to be clear from the fourth Council of *Carthage*, where, at his Ordination he is appointed to receive at the *Archdeacon's* hand a *Candlestick* with a *Taper*, that he may know 'tis the Duty of his place to light up the *Lights* in the *Church*. This might very well be in those times, but 'tis certain the Office of *Acolythus* was in use long before that Custom of setting up Lights at the reading of the Gospel was brought into the Church. By *Cyprian* also is mentioned the Office of the *EXORCIST*, whose Business was to attend the *Catechumens* and *Energumeni*, or such as were possessed of the Devil. For after the miraculous Power of casting out Devils began to cease, or at least not to be so common as it was, these possessed Persons used to come to the *out-parts* of the Church, where a Person was appointed to *exorcise* them, *i. e.* to pray over them, with such Prayers as were peculiarly composed for those occasions; and this he did in the publick Name of the whole Church, the People also at the same time praying within; by which means the possessed Person was delivered from the Tyranny of the evil Spirit; without any such *Charms* and *Conjurations*, and other *unchristian* Forms and Rites, which by degrees crept into this Office, and are at this day in use in the Church of

Inter Epist. Cypr. Epist 2. *p.* 8. *Epist.* 28. *p.* 41.

Can. 6.

Epist. 16. *p.* 29. & 146.

of *Rome*. Besides to the *Exorcist's* Office it belonged to instruct the *Catechumens*, and to train them up in the first Principles of the Christian Faith: In which sense the *Exorcist* is by *Harmenopulus* explained by *Catechist*; and to *exorcise* (says *Balsamon*) is κατηχεῖν ἀπίστους, to *instruct Unbelievers*. Chap. 8. *Epist. Can. ff. 1. Tit. 9. Jur. Græc. Rom. p. 16. In Can. 26. Conc. Laod.*

Next to the *Exorcist* was the *Lector* or *READER* (mentioned frequently by St. *Cyprian*) whose business was to stand near the *Ambo* or *Pulpit*, and to read those Portions of Holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as principal parts of the Divine Service. This Office *Julian* (who was afterwards *Emperor*) when a young Student at *Nicomedia*, took upon him, and became a *Reader* in that Church; which he did only to blind his Cousin *Constantius*, who began to suspect him as inclining to *Paganism*, to which he openly revolted afterwards, and became a bitter and virulent Enemy to Christians; making an ill use of those Scriptures, which he had once *privately* studied, and publickly read to the People. I know not whether it may be worth the while to take notice of the *Ostiarii*, or *Door-keeper*, answerable to the *Nethinims* in the *Jewish* Church; who were to attend the Church-Doors at times of Publick Meetings, to keep out notorious *Hereticks*, *Jews* and *Gentiles* from entring into the Christian Assemblies. It doubtless took its rise in the times of Persecution, Christians then being forc'd to keep their Meetings as private and clancular as they could, and to guard their Assemblies with all possible Diligence; lest some *Jew* or *Infidel* stealing in, should have gone and accused them before the Magistrate. What other Officers there were (or whether any at all) in those times, in and about the Church, will not be worth our labour to enquire. *Socrat. H. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 1. p. 166.*

To these Offices they were set apart by solemn Rites, of *Prayer* and *Imposition* of *Hands*; a Ceremony

Part I. ny (so far as χειροτονία is strictly taken for *lifting* up the Hand in *suffrage*) commonly used at *Athens*, and some of the *States* of *Greece*, in the designing and electing Persons to be Publick Magistrates. But more particularly in use amongst the *Jews*, and from them doubtless (as many other of the *Synagogue-Rites*) transferred into the *Christian* Church, and there constantly used both as to the *lifting up* and *laying on* the Hands, as the Rite of conferring Ordination upon the Ministers of *Christ*. Only it is here to be remembred, that there was a *double Imposition* of Hands, in setting apart Ecclesiastical Officers: The one was καθιέρωσις, or by way of *Consecration*; and this was the proper way of ordaining the first Rank of Officers, *Bishops*, *Presbyters* and *Deacons*: the other εὐλογία, by way of *Blessing*; Hands being laid upon them only, as in the Absolution of Penitents, by way of solemn *Benediction*: And thus the inferiour Officers, *Sub-deacons*, *Readers*, *&c.* and *Deaconesses* were set apart. All Orders under Bishops were ordained by the Bishop, the Bishop himself by all the Bishops of that *Province*, who used to meet together for that purpose, if nearness of place and other Conveniencies would allow; otherwise *three* (and in case of necessity *two*) might do it, the rest testifying their consent in Writing: and the Person thus ordained was to be confirmed by the *Metropolitan* of that Province. And whereas the Council of *Antioch* provides, that no Bishop shall be ordained without the *Metropolitan* being present, it is to be understood (as *Balsamon* tells us) of his leave and permission, or his appointing it to be so. For the Ordination of the rest of the Clergy, *Priests*, *Deacons*, *&c.* the act and presence of one Bishop might suffice: And as no more than one was required, so one at least was necessary; the Power of conferring *Orders*, being even by those who otherwise have had no mighty kindness for *Episcopacy*, acknowledged an unquestionable *Right* of the Epis-

Conc. Nicen. Can. 4.

Can. 19.

copal

copal Office: Insomuch that in the case of *Athanasius*, it was a just exception against *Ischyras*, that he had been ordained by *Colythus*, who was no higher than a Presbyter, and consequently his Ordination by the Council was adjudged null and void. Chap. 8. *Athan. Apol. 2. de fug. sua, p. 570. Tom. 1.*

At all Ordinations, especially of superiour Officers, the *People* of the Place were always present, and ratified the Action with their Approbation and Consent. And indeed it cannot be denied but that the People, in some Places especially, were very much considered in this Affair, it being seldom or never done without their *Presence and Suffrage*. To this end the Bishop was wont, before every Ordination, to *propound* and *publish* the Names of those who were to have holy Orders conferred upon them; that so the People, who best knew their Lives and Conversations, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against it. By which means the *unworthy* were discovered and rejected, the *deserving* honoured and admitted; the Ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having past the common Vote and Suffrage without any exception made against it, as *Cyprian* speaks. Hence the *Clergy*, of what Order soever, were said *prædicari*, to be *propounded* or published: And this way seemed so fit and reasonable, that *Severus* the *Emperor* (a wise and prudent Prince) in imitation of the *Christians*, established it in the disposal of Civil Offices. For when he had a mind to send out any Governors of Provinces, or to appoint *Receivers* of his *Revenues*, he propounded the Names of those he intended, desiring the People to except against the Persons, if they knew them guilty of any Crimes which they were able to make good against them: *Affirming it to be unfit* (says his own *Historian*) *that when the Christians and Jews did it in publishing those who were to be ordained their Priests and Ministers, the same should not be observed in the*

Vid. Constit. Ap. lib. 8. c. 1004. Cypr. Epist. 68 p. 113, 114.

Lamprid. in vit. Alex. Sev. c. 45. p. 570.

Part I. *Election of Governors of Provinces, who had the Lives and Fortunes of Men committed to them.* When the Case so happened, that the Ordination was more remote or private, they were then required to bring sufficient *Testimonials*. Thus *Cyprian*, when ordaining *Saturus* and *Optatus* to be *Readers*; We examined (says he) whether the *Testimonials* agreed to them, which they ought to have who are admitted into the Clergy.

Ep. 24. p. 35.

And indeed they proceeded in this Affair with all imaginable Care and Prudence; they examin'd Mens Fitness for the Place to which they were set apart, enquired severely what had been the course and manner of their Life; how they had carried themselves in their Youth, and whether they had govern'd it by the strict Rules of Piety. This antient Custom (as St. *Basil* calls it) was ratified by the *Nicene* Council, declaring, *That none should be ordained Presbyter without previous Examination, especially a strict inquiry into his Life and Manners.* For the *Apostolick* Church (says *Joseph* the *Ægyptian*, in his *Arabick* Paraphrase of that *Canon*) admits none in this Case, but him that is of great Innocency and an unspotted Life; free from those Crimes and Enormities which he there particularly reckons up. They suffered not Men in those Days to *leap* into Ecclesiastical Orders, but by the usual steps and staying the appointed times. *Cyprian* commends *Cornelius*, Bishop of *Rome*, that he did not skip into the Chair, but passed through all the Ecclesiastical Offices, ascending through all the Degrees of Religion, till he came *ad sacerdotii sublime fastigium*, to the top of the highest Order. A thing expressly provided for by the Synod of *Sardis*, That no Man, though never so rich, though furnished with never so good a knack of *Speech* and *Oratory*, should yet be made Bishop before he had passed through the preceeding Orders of *Reader*, *Sub-*

Basil. Ep. 181. p. 194. Tom. 3.

Can. 9.

Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. p. 67.

Can. 10.

Sub-deacon, *Deacon*, and *Presbyter*; that having been found fit in each of these, he might, step by step, ascend up to the Episcopal Chair: And that he should spend some considerable time in each of these Degrees, that so his Faith, and the Innocency and Excellency of his Life, his Constancy and Moderation might be made known to all; and his fitness for that Sacred Function being made apparent, might procure him the greater Honour and Reverence from others. Men were then forced to stay their full time before they could be promoted to any higher Order. They did not commence *Divines* and *Bishops* in a Day, (ἀυθήμερον ἄγιοι καὶ θεολόγοι, as *Nazianzen* elegantly calls them) like some he complains of in his time, who were not polished by Time and Study, but fitted and made Bishops *all at once*; whom therefore he wittily compares to the *Dragon's Teeth*, which, the Fable tells us, *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which immediately sprung up *Giants* out of the Earth arm'd *Cap-a-pee*, perfect *Men* and perfect *Warriors* in one Day: And just such (says he) were some Prelates, consecrated, made wise and learned in one Day, who yet understood nothing before, nor brought any thing to the *Order*, but only *a good will* to be there. For the *Age* of the Persons that were to be ordained, they usually observed the *Apostolick* Canon, *not to chuse a Novice*, but of an Age competent to that Office that he was chosen to; though it varied according to Times and Persons, and the occasions of the Church. For that of *Bishops*, I find not any certain Age positively set down. *Photius* in his *Nomo-Canon*, speaks of an *Imperial* Constitution, that requires a Bishop not to be under thirty five: But the *Apostolical Constitutions* allow not a Man to be made a Bishop under fifty Years of Age, as having then passed all *Juvenile* Petulancies and Disorders. 'Tis certain, they were not generally (some extraordinary Instances

Chap. 8.

Orat. 1. *de Theol. p.* 535. *& in laud. Bas. Or.* 20. *p.* 335.

Τίτλ. ά. κεφ. κή. *p.* 20.

Lib. 2. *c.* 1. *p.* 824.

Part I. ces alter not the caſe) promoted to that Office, till they were of a conſiderable Age, and thence frequently ſtiled *majores natu* in the Writings of the Church. *Presbyters* were commonly made at thirty; yea, the *Can.* 11. Council of *Neocæſarea* decreed, that no Man, though otherwiſe of never ſo unqueſtionable a Converſation, ſhould be ordained *Presbyter* before that Age: The reaſon whereof they give, becauſe *Chriſt* himſelf was not *baptized*, nor began to preach till the thirtieth *Conc. Agd.* Year of his Age. The Council of *Agde* requires the *Can.* 17. ſame Age, but aſſigns another reaſon; not before thirty Years of Age, becauſe then (ſay they) he comes to the Age of a *perfect Man*. *Deacons* were made at *twenty five*, and the like diſtance and proportion obſerved for the inferiour Officers under them. I take no notice in this place of *Monks*, *Hermits*, &c. partly becauſe although they were under a kind of *Eccleſiaſtical* relation, by reaſon of their more than ordinarily ſtrict and ſevere Profeſſion of Religion, yet were they not uſually in *Holy Orders*; and partly becauſe *Monachiſm* was of no very early ſtanding in the Church, beginning probably about the times of the latter Perſecutions: and even then too *Monks* were quite another thing, both in *Profeſſion*, *Habit*, and *way of* Life, from what they are at this day; as will abundantly appear to him that will take the pains to compare the account which St. *Hierom*, *Auguſtine*, *Palladius*, *Caſſian*, and others give of thoſe *Primitive Monks*, with the ſeveral *Orders* in the Church of *Rome* at this day.

I ſhall only add, that out of the *Monks*, Perſons were uſually made choice of to be advanced into the *Cod. Theod.* *Clergy*, as is evident not only from multitudes of *l.* 16. *tit.* 2. Inſtances in the Writers of the fourth and following *de Epiſc.* *&c. l.* 32. Centuries, but from an expreſs Law of the Emperor *Arcadius* to that purpoſe: The Strictneſs of their Lives, and the *Purity* of their Manners, more immediately

mediately qualifying them for those holy Offices; insomuch that many times they were advanced into the Episcopal Chair, without going through the usual intermediate Orders of the Church. Several Instances whereof (*Serapion*, *Apollonius*, *Agatho*, *Aristo*, and some others) *Athanasius* reckons up in his Epistle to *Dracontius*; who being a *Monk*, refused a *Bishoprick* to which he was chosen. But because we meet, in the antient Writings of the Church, with very frequent mention of Persons of another Sex, *Deaconnesses*, who were imployed in many Offices of Religion; it may not be amiss, in this place, to give some short account of them. Their Original was very early, and of equal standing with the Infancy of the Church; such was *Phœbe* in the Church of *Cenchris*, mentioned by St. *Paul*; such were those two *Servant-Maids* spoken of by *Pliny*, in his Letters to the Emperor, whom he examined upon the Rack: Such was the famous *Olympias* in the Church of *Constantinople*; not to mention any more particular Instances. They were either *Widows*, and then not to be taken into the Service of the Church under *threescore* Years of Age, according to St. *Paul*'s Direction; or else *Virgins*, who having been educated in order to it, and given Testimony of a chaste and sober Conversation, were set apart at *forty*. What the proper Place and Ministry of these *Deaconnesses* was in the antient Church, though *Matthew Blastares* seems to render a little doubtful; yet certainly it principally consisted in such Offices as these, to attend upon the Women at times of Publick Worship, especially in the Administration of Baptism; that when they were to be divested in order to their *Immersion*, they might overshadow them, so as nothing of Indecency and Uncomelines might appear. Sometimes they were imployed in *instructing* the more rude and ignorant sort of Women in the plain

Chap. 8.

Tom. 1. *p.* 738.

Syntagm. c. 11. *lit. T. p.* 71. *Epiph. Hæres.* 79. *p.* 447.

Part I. and easy Principles of *Christianity*, and in preparing them for *Baptism*; otherwhiles in visiting and attending upon Women that were sick; in conveying Messages, Counsels, Consolations, Relief, (especially in times of Persecution, when it was dangerous for the *Officers* of the Church) to the *Martyrs* and them that were in Prison: and these Women no doubt it was that *Libanius* speaks of amongst the Christians, who were so very ready to be imployed in these Offices of Humanity. But to return.

Orat. de vinctis, p. 56.

Persons being thus set apart for Holy Offices, the Christians of those Days discovered no less Piety in that mighty Respect and Reverence which they paid to them. That the Ministers of Religion should be peculiarly honoured and regarded, seems to have been accounted a piece of natural *Justice* by the common Sentiments of Mankind: The most barbarous and unpolished Nations that ever had a value for any thing of Religion, have always had a proportionable regard to them, to whom the Care and Administration of it belong. *Julian* the Emperor expresly pleads for it as the most reasonable thing in the World, that *Priests* should be honoured, yea, in some respects, *above* Civil Magistrates; as being the immediate Attendants and domestick Servants of *God*, our *Intercessors* with Heaven, and the means of deriving down great Blessings from God upon us. But never was this clearlier demonstrated than in the Practice of the Primitive Christians, who carried themselves towards their *Bishops* and *Ministers* with that Kindness and Veneration which they were capable to express towards them. St. *Paul* bears record to the *Galatians*, that he was accounted so dear to them, that if the *plucking out their Eyes* would have done him any good, they were ready to have done it for his sake. And St. *Clemens* testifies of the *Corinthians*, that they walked in the Laws of God, being

Julian. Fragm. Oper. c. 1. p. 542.

Gal. 4. 15.

Pag. 2.

ing subject to them that had the *Rule over them*; yielding also due honour to the Seniors or Elder Persons that were amongst them. That by ἡγουμένοι in this place he should mean *Civil Magistrates* (as some have told us) I can hardly be perswaded, both because 'tis the *same* word that is used by the Author to the *Hebrews*, *Obey*, τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, *them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves*; (and indeed both *Eusebius* and St. *Hierom* of old, observed such a mighty Affinity in the *Phrase* between this and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, as certainly to conclude St. *Clemens* to have been, if not the *Author*, at least the *Translator* of that Epistle;) and also because the sole occasion of St. *Clemens*'s writing this Epistle, was a Mutiny which they had made against the *spiritual* Guides and Governors; and therefore, according to the right Art of *Orators*, he first commends them for their eminent Subjection to them, that he might with the more advantage reprove and censure them for their Schism afterwards: which he does severely in the latter part of the Epistle; and towards the end of it, he exhorts those who had laid the foundation of the Sedition, to become subject to their Presbyters; and being instructed to Repentance, to bow the Knees of their Hearts, to lay aside the arrogant and insolent Boldness of their Tongues, and to learn to subject and submit themselves. The truth is, Bishops and Ministers were then looked upon as the common *Parents* of Christians; whom as such they honoured and obeyed, and to whom they repaired for Counsel and Direction in all important Cases. 'Tis plain from several Passages in *Tertullian*, That none could lawfully *marry*, till they had first advised with the Bishop and Clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their leave; which probably they did, to secure the Person from marrying with a *Gentile*, or any of them that were without, and from the

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Heb. 13. 17

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. *c.* 38. *p.* 110. *de Scrip. Eccl. in Clem.*

Vid. Constit. Apost. l. 2. *c.* 33. *p.* 859.

De monogam. c. 11. *p.* 531. *Ad Uxor. l.* 2. *c.* 2, 9. *Vid. de Coron. mil. c.* 13. *p.* 139.

Part. I. the Inconveniences that might enſue upon ſuch a Match. No Reſpect, no Submiſſion was thought great enough, whereby they might do honour to them; they were wont to kiſs their Hands, to embrace their Feet; and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any Place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or diſmiſs them with the univerſal Confluence of the People. Happy they thought themſelves, if they could but entertain them in their Houſes, and bleſs their Roofs with ſuch welcome Gueſts. Amongſt the various ways of Kindneſs which *Conſtantine* the Great ſhewed to the *Clergy*, the *Writer* of his Life tells us, That he uſed to treat them at his own *Table*, though in the meaneſt and moſt deſpicable Habit: He never went a Journey, but he took ſome of them along with him; reckoning that thereby he made himſelf ſurer of the propitious and favourable Influence of the Divine Preſence. What Honours he did them at the Council of *Nice*, where he refuſed to ſit down, till they had given him intimation; with what magnificent Gifts and Entertainments he treated them afterwards, the ſame Author relates at large. The truth is, the Piety of that devout and excellent Prince, thought nothing too good for thoſe who were the Meſſengers of God, and Miniſters of holy things: And ſo infinitely tender was he of their Honour, as to profeſs, That if at any time he ſhould ſpy a *Biſhop* overtaken in any immodeſt and uncomely Action, he would cover him with his own *Imperial Robe*, rather than others ſhould take notice of it, to the ſcandal of his Place and Perſon. And becauſe their *Spiritual* Authority and Relation, might not be ſufficient to ſecure them from the Contempt of rude and profane Perſons; therefore the firſt Chriſtian Emperors inveſted them with Power even in *Civil* Cauſes, as the way to beget them Reſpect and Authority amongſt

Vid. Chryſ. de S. Melet. Antioch. Hom. 45. *To.* 1. *p.* 526. *& Annot. p.* 91.

De vit. Conſt. l. 1. c. 42. *p.* 429.

Lib. 3.

Theod. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 1. c. 11.

amongst the People. Thus *Constantine* (as *Sozomen* tells us, and he sets it down as a great Argument of that Prince's Reverence for Religion) ordained, that Persons contending in Law, might if they pleased remove their Cause out of the *Civil* Courts, and appeal to the *Judgment* of the Bishops; whose Sentence should be *firm*, and take place before that of any other Judges, as if it had been immediately passed by the Emperor himself. And Causes thus judged by *Bishops*, all Governors of Provinces and their Officers were presently to put into execution; which was afterwards ratified by two Laws, one of *Arcadius*, another of *Honorius*, to that purpose. This Power the Bishops sometimes *delegated* to their inferior Clergy, making them Judges in these Causes, as appears from what *Socrates* reports of *Sylvanus*, Bishop of *Troas*, That finding a *Male-administration* of this Power, he took it out of the Hands of his *Clergy*, and devolved the hearing and determining Causes over to the *Laity*. And to name no more, St. *Augustine* more than once and again tells us, how much he was crouded, and even oppressed in deciding the Contests and Causes of secular Persons. It seems they thought themselves happy in those days, if they could have their Causes heard and determined by *Bishops*.

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Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 9. p. 413.

C. Tit. 4. de Episc. Audient. l. 7, 8.

Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 37. p. 383.

Ep. 147. col. 68. 5. vid. ep. Nebrid. ad Aug. ep. 114. & alibi passim.

A Pious Bishop, and a Faithful Minister was in those days dearer to them than the most valuable Blessings upon Earth, and they could want any thing rather than be without them. When *Chrysostom* was driven by the *Empress* into Banishment, the People as he went along burst into Tears, and cryed out, *'Twas better the Sun should not shine, than that* John Chrysostom *should not preach.* And when, through the Importunity of the People, he was recalled from his former Banishment, and diverted into the Suburbs till he might have an opportunity to make a publick Vindication of his Innocency, the People not

Chrys. Ep. 125. tom. 4. p. 763.

Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 16. p. 324.

Part I. not enduring such Delays, the Emperor was forced to send for him into the City, the People universally meeting him, and conducting him to his Church, with all Expressions of Reverence and Veneration. Nay, while he was yet *Presbyter* of the Church of *Antioch*, so highly was he loved and honoured by the People of that Place, that though he was chosen to the *See* of *Constantinople*, and sent for by the Emperor's Letters, though their Bishop made an Oration on purpose to persuade them to it, yet would they by no means be brought to part with him: and when the Messengers by force attempted to bring him away, he was forced, to prevent a Tumult, to withdraw and hide himself, the People keeping a Guard about him, lest he should be taken from them. Nor could the Emperor or his Agents with all their Arts effect it, till he used this Wile: He secretly wrote to the Governor of *Antioch*, who pretending to *Chrysostom*, that he had Concerns of moment to impart to him, invited him to a private Place without the City, where seizing upon him, by Mules which he had in readiness he conveyed him to *Constantinople*: where that his welcome might be the more magnificent, the Emperor commanded, That all Persons of Eminency, both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, should with all possible Pomp and State go *six Miles* to meet him. Of *Nazianzen* (who sate in the same Chair of *Constantinople* before him) I find, that when he would have left that Bishoprick by reason of the Stirs that were about it, and delivered himself up to Solitude and a private Life, as a thing much more suitable to his Humour and *Genius*; many of the People came about him, with Tears beseeching him not to forsake his Flock, which he had hitherto fed with so much Sweat and Labour. They could not then lose their spiritual Guides, but they looked upon themselves as *Widows* and *Orphans*, resenting

Metaphras. in vit. Chrys. apud Surium ad diem 27.

Greg. Presbyt. de vit. Greg. Naz. præfix. oper. Naz.

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senting their Death with a general Sorrow and Lamentation, as if they had lost a *common Father*. *Nazianzen* reports, that when his Father (who was Bishop of but a little *Diocess*) lay very sick, and all other Remedies proved unsuccessful, the People generally flocked to Church, and (though it was then the *joyful* time of *Easter*) broke out into mournful and passionate Complaints, and with the most earnests Prayers and Tears besought God for his Life. And of *Basil*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, he tells us, That when he lay a dying the whole City came about him, not able to bear his Departure from them, praying as if they would have *laid hands* upon his Soul, and by force detained it in his Body: They were (says he) even distracted with the thoughts of so great a loss, nor was there any who would not have been willing to have been deprived of *part* of his own Life, might it have added unto his. His Funeral was solemnized with all possible Testimonies of Love and honourable Attendance, and with the abundant Tears not only of *Christians*, but of *Jews* and *Heathens*; the Confluence so vast, that many were pressed to Death in the Croud, and sent to bear him Company to his *long home*. And that we may see that their Respect did not lie merely in a few kind Words or external Protestations, they made it good in more real and evident Demonstrations, by providing *liberal Maintenance* for them, parting at first with their own Estates to supply the uses of the Church, and after that, making no less large than frequent Contributions, which could not but amount to very considerable Sums, the Piety of Christians daily adding to their Liberality; of which we may make some Estimate, by what the Heathen Historian, with a little kind of Envy, relates only of the Church of *Rome*, (and doubtless it was so in some proportion in other places) that the Profits of the *Clergy*, arising from

In laud. patr. Or. 19. p. 304.

In laud. Basil. Or. 20. p. 371.

Amm. Marcellin. lib. 27. p. 1739.

Oblations

Part I.

Oblations chiefly, was so great, as to enable them to live in a *Prince-like* State and Plenty. And not long after, it became the Object not only of Admiration, but Envy; insomuch that *Chrysostom* was forced to make one whole Sermon *against those that envied the Wealth of the Clergy*. It was also the great care of those times, to free them from what might be either scandalous or burthensom to their Calling. *Constantine* decreed, That the Orthodox Clergy should be exempt from all Civil Offices, or whatever might hinder their Attendance upon the Services of the Church; his Son *Constantius*, That Bishops in many Cases should not be chargeable in the secular Courts, but be tryed in an Assembly of Bishops: which Privilege was extended by *Honorius* to all the *Clergy*, that they should be tryed before their Bishops; before whom he also ordained, that all Causes properly belonging to Religion should be brought, and be determined by them: And by another *Constitution*, That for the Veneration that is due to the Church, all Ecclesiastical Causes should be decided with all possible speed. And to name no more, that the Persons of Ministers might be secured from foreign Attempts, he, and his Collegue *Arcadius*, made a Law, That whosoever did offer any Violence to them, should upon conviction, or confessing of the Fact, be punished with *Death*; and that the Ministers of Civil Justice should not stay till the Bishop complained of the Injury that was done (it being probable that he would rather incline to *Mercy* and *Forgiveness*) but that every one in this Case should be admitted and encouraged to prefer and prosecute the Charge: And in case the rude Multitude should by Arms, or otherwise obstruct the Execution, and that the Powers of that Place could not see it done, that then they should call in the Assistance of the Governor of the Province, to see Justice put into Execution.

περὶ τοῦ ὅτι δὲ χρὴ ὀνειδίζειν τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἐφ' ὧν σώσιν, &c. *Tom. 6. p. 896. edit. Savil.*

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 10 c. 7. p. 394. & *Cod. Theod. lib. 16. Tit. 2. leg. 1, 2. Ib. l. 12. Ib. l. 21. Ib. Tit. 11. l. 1.*

Ib. lib. 2. Tit. 4. l. 7.

Lib. 16. Tit. 2. l. 31.

Execution. And because, next to his *Person*, nothing is so dear to a *Clergy-man* as his *Credit* and *Reputation*, therefore the Emperor *Honorius* took care by a Law, that whosoever (be he a Person of the highest Rank) should charge any *Clergy-man* with Crimes which he was not able to make good, he himself should be publickly accounted vile and infamous, it being but just and equal *(says the Law)* that as Guilt should be punished, and Offenders reckoned as Spots and Blemishes to the Church; so that injured Innocency should be righted and maintained. How infinitely tender the first general Council of *Constantinople* was in this Case, to secure the Honour and good Name of *Bishops* and *Clergy-men*, against the malicious Insinuations and Charges of false Accusers, may appear by the large Provision which they make about it in the *sixth Canon* of that Council. And because it sometimes so happens, that a Man's Enemies are those of his own House, therefore the *Apostolical Canons* ordain, That if any *Clergy-man* reproach and defame a Bishop, he shall be deposed from his Ministry; for thou mayest not (says the Canon) *speak evil of the Ruler of thy People:* but if it be a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, whom he thus reproaches, he shall be suspended from the Execution of his Office. So sacred and venerable did they then account the Persons and Concernments of those who ministred in the Affairs of Divine Worship!

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Ib. l. 41.

Can. 55, 56.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of their uſual Worſhip, both Private and Publick.

The Chriſtians Worſhip of God in their Families diſcovered. Their uſual times of Prayer. Praying before and after Meals. Singing of Pſalms, and Reading the Scriptures, at the ſame time. Frequency in Prayer noted in divers Inſtances. Their great Reverence for the Holy Scriptures, in reading, expounding, and committing them to Memory. Several Inſtances of it. Their care in inſtructing their Families in Divine Things. Singing of Pſalms mixed with their uſual Labours. An account of their Publick Worſhip. The Order of the Service in their Aſſemblies. Prayer: Reading the Scriptures: Two Leſſons out of each Teſtament. Clemens's *Epiſtle, and the Writings of other Pious Men read in the Church. Singing a part of the Publick Service. How antient: What thoſe Hymns were. The Sermon or Diſcourſe, upon what Subject uſually. Such Diſcourſes called* Tractatus, *and why. More Sermons than one at the ſame time. Sermons preached in the Afternoon as well as in the Morning. The mighty Concourſe and Confluence of People to theſe Publick Solemnities. The Departure of the Catechumens, Penitents, &c. The* Miſſa Catechumenorum, *what. The* Miſſa Fidelium. *The word* Miſſa

or

or Mass, *whence, and how used in the Writers of those times. The singular Reverence they shewed in these Duties. Great Modesty and Humility. Praying with Hands lift up in the Form of a Cross, why. They prayed either kneeling or standing. Sitting in Prayer noted as a Posture of great Irreverence. Praying towards the East. The Universality of this Custom. The Reasons of it enquired into. Their Reverence in hearing God's Word. The People generally stood. Standing up at the Gospels. The remarkable Piety and Devotion of* Constantine *the Great. No departing the Congregation till the Blessing was given.* Chap. 9.

THUS far we have discovered the Piety of those antient times, as to those necessary *Circumstances* that relate to the Worship of God, we are next to see wherein their *WORSHIP* it self did consist; which we shall consider both as *Private* and *Publick*, that which they performed at Home, and that which was done in their Solemn and *Church-Assemblies:* only let it be remembred, that under the Notion of Worship I here comprehended all those Duties of *Piety* that refer to God. The Duties of their *Private* Worship, were of two sorts, either such as were more *solemn* and stated, and concerned the whole Family, or such as Persons discharged *alone*, or at least did not tie up themselves to usual times. For the first, which are properly *Family-duties*, they were usually performed in this order: At their first rising in the morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to Prayer (as is plainly implied in *Chrysostom*'s Exhortation) to praise God for the Protection and Refreshment of the Night,

Hom. 1. *de precat. tom.* 1. *p.* 7, 50. *vid. Basil. Ep. ad Greg. de vit. solit. tom.* 3. *p.* 43. *A.*

Part I. Night, and to beg his Grace and Blessing for the following Day: This was done by the *Master* of the House, unless some *Minister* of Religion were present. 'Tis probable that at this time they recited the *Creed*, or some Confession of their Faith, by which they professed themselves *Christians*, and, as 'twere, armed themselves against the Assaults of Dangers and Temptations: however, I question not, but that now they read some parts of *Scripture*, which they were most ready to do at all times, and therefore certainly would not omit it now. That they had their set *Hours* for Prayer, the *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, is plain, both from *Cyprian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, and others: This they borrowed from the *Jews*, who divided the Day into four *greater Hours*, the *first*, *third*, *sixth*, and *ninth* Hour, the three last whereof were stated Hours of Prayer: the first Hour began at six in the Morning, and held till nine; the third from nine till twelve; and at this Hour 'twas that the *Apostles* and *Christians* were met together, when the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them: The sixth Hour was from twelve till three in the *Afternoon*, and at this time *Peter went up to the House-top to pray*; the ninth was from three till six at night, and now it was that *Peter* and *John* went up to the Temple, *it being the ninth Hour of Prayer*. This Division was observed by the *Christians* of succeeding times, though whether punctually kept to in their *Family-Devotions*, I am not able to affirm. About *Noon*, before their going to dinner, some Portions of *Scripture* were read, and the Meat being set upon the *Table*, a *Blessing* was solemnly begged of God, as the Fountain of all Blessings (and so religious herein was the good Emperor *Theodosius junior*, that he would never eat any Meat, no not so much as a Fig, or any other Fruit, before he had first given Thanks to the great *Sovereign Creator*) and both Meat and Drink set apart with

De Orat. Dom. p. 196 *Strom. lib.* 7. *p.* 722.

Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 7 *p.* 728. *Tert. Apol. c.* 39. *p.* 32.

Sozom. præfat. ad Hist. Eccl. p. 385. *De Cor. mil. c.* 3. *p.* 102. *lib.* 2. *in Job. fol.* 36. *col.* 2. *tom.* 2

with the *Sign* of the *Cross*, (a custom they used in the most common actions of Life) as is expressly affirmed both by *Tertullian* and *Origen*; where he also gives a Form of such Prayers as they were wont to use before Meals, *viz.* that lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, they prayed thus: *Thou that giveſt Food to all Fleſh, grant that we may receive this Food with thy Bleſſing: thou Lord haſt ſaid, that if we drink any thing that is deadly, if we call upon thy Name it ſhall not hurt us; thou therefore who art Lord of all Power and Glory, turn away all evil and malignant Quality from our Food, and whatever pernicious Influence it may have upon us.* When they were at dinner, they ſung *Hymns* and *Pſalms* *; a practice which † *Clem. Alexandrinus* commends, as very ſutable to *Chriſtians*, as a modeſt and decent Way of praiſing God, while we are partaking of his Creatures. || *Chryſoſtom* greatly pleads for it, that Men ſhould be careful to teach them their Wives and Children, and which they ſhould uſe even at their *ordinary* Works, but eſpecially at *Meals*, ſuch divine Songs being an excellent *Antidote* againſt Temptations: for *(ſays he)* as the Devil is never more ready to enſnare us than at *Meals*, either by *Intemperance*, *Eaſe*, or immoderate *Mirth*, therefore both before and at *Meals* we ſhould fortify our ſelves with *Pſalms*; nay, and when we riſe from the *Table* with our Wives and Children, we ſhould again ſing *Hymns* to God. They uſed alſo to have the *Scriptures* read; and, as I have elſewhere noted out of *Nazianzen*, every time they took the *Cup* to drink, made the Sign of the *Croſs*, and called upon *Chriſt*. Dinner being ended, they concluded with *Prayer*, giving Thanks to God for their preſent Refreſhment, and begging his continu'd Proviſion of thoſe good things which he had promiſed to them. So great a place had *Religion* in thoſe days even in Mens common and natural Actions, and ſo careful

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* *Ne ſit vel hora convivii gratiæ cæleſtis immunis, ſonet Pſalmos convivium ſobrium magis cariſſimos paſces, ſi ſit nobis ſpiritualis auditio, prolectet aures religioſa mulcedo.* Cyprian. Epiſt. ad Donat. *in fine.*

† *Pædag. lib.* 2. *c.* 4. *p.* 165.

|| *In Pſalm* 41. *tom.* 3. *p.* 147.

Cypr. Epiſt. 1. *p.* 7.

Clem. Alex. ut ſupra.

Baſil. Ep. ad Greg. tom. 3. *p.* 46.

Part I. were they, not to *ſtarve* the Soul, while they were *feeding* of the Body. Much after the ſame rate they ſpent the reſt of the day, till the night approached; when, before their going to reſt, the Family was again called to *Prayer*, after which they went to Bed: about *Midnight* they were generally wont to riſe, to *pray* and to ſing *Hymns* to God. This cuſtom was very antient, and doubtleſs took its original from the firſt times of Perſecution, when not daring to meet together in the *Day*, they were forced to keep their Religious Aſſemblies in the *Night*; and though this was afterwards antiquated, as being found inconvenient for the generality of *Chriſtians*, yet did it ſtill continue in the *nocturnal* Hours of *Monaſteries* and religious *Orders*.

Clem. Alex. pædag. lib. 2. c. 9. p. 185.

But beſides theſe ſtated and ordinary Devotions, perform'd by a joint Concurrence of the Family, the Chriſtians of thoſe days were careful to ſpend all the time they could, even when alone, in actions of Piety and Religion. They were moſt frequent in *Prayer*: *Euſebius* reports of St. *James* the *juſt*, that he was wont every day to go alone into the Church, and there *kneeling* upon the Pavement ſo long to pour out his Prayers to God, till his Knees became as *hard* and *brawny* as a *Camel*'s; the ſame which *Nazianzen* alſo tells us of his good Siſter *Gorgonia*, that by often praying, her Knees were become hard, and did as 'twere ſtick to the Ground. *Conſtantine* the Great, tho burdened with the Cares of ſo vaſt an Empire, did yet every day at his wonted hours withdraw from all the company of the *Court*, retire into his *Cloſet*, and upon his knees offer up his Prayers to God: and to let the World know how much he was devoted to this Duty, he cauſed his *Image* in all his Gold-*Coins*, in his *Pictures* and *Statues*, to be repreſented in the Poſture of a *Perſon praying*, *with his Hands ſpread abroad, and his Eyes liſt up to Heaven.* Their next

Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 2. c. 23. p. 63. ex Hegiſippo.

In laud. Gorgon. or. 10. p. 183.

De vit. Conſt. lib. 4. c. 22.

Ibid. c. 15. p. 533.

next care was, diligently and seriously to read the *Scripture*, to be mighty in the Divine *Oracles*, as indeed they had an invaluable esteem of, and reverence for the Word of God, as the Book which they infinitely prized beyond all others; upon which account *Nazianzen* very severely chides his dear Friend *Gregory Nyssen*, that having laid aside the Holy Scriptures (the most excellent Writings in the World) which he was wont to read both *privately* to himself, and *publickly* to the People, he had given up himself to the study of *foreign* and prophane Authors, desirous rather to be accounted an *Orator* than a *Christian*. St. *Augustine* tells us, that after his Conversion (how meanly soever he had before thought of them) the *Scriptures* were become the matter of his most *pure* and *chaste* Delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even those of *Cicero* himself, which once he had so much doted on) became dry and unsavory to him. In the study of this Book it was that Christians then mainly exercised themselves, as thinking they could never fully enough *understand* it, or deeply enough *imprint* it upon their hearts and memories. Of the younger *Theodosius*, they tell us, that rising early every morning, he, together with his Sisters, interchangeably sung *Psalms* of praise to God; the Holy Scriptures he could exactly *repeat* in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the Bishops that were at *Court*, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop *himself*. We read of *Origen*, though then but a Child, that when his Father commanded him to commit some places of Scripture to *Memory*, he most willingly set himself to it; and not content with the bare reading, he began to enquire into the more profound and recondite meaning of it, often asking his Father (to his no less *Joy* than *Admiration*) what the sense of this or that place of Scripture was: and this Thirst after Divine Knowledg still continued and

Chap. 9.

Epist. 43. *p.* 804.

Vid. Conjess. l. 3. *c.* 5. *& l.* 7. *c.* 20, 21.

Socrat. H. Eccl. lib. 7. *c.* 22. *p.* 361.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. *c.* 2. *p.* 202.

Part I.

increaſed in him all his Life; St. *Hierom* reporting it out of a Letter of one who was his great *Companion* and Benefactor, that he never went to *Meals* without ſome part of Scripture read, never to *ſleep*, till ſome about him had read them to him; and that both by *Night* and *Day*, no ſooner had he done praying but he betook himſelf to reading, and after reading returned again to Prayer. *Valens*, Deacon of the Church of *Jeruſalem*, a venerable old Man, had ſo entirely given up himſelf to the Study of the Scriptures, that it was all one to him to *read* or to *repeat* whole *Pages* together. The like we find of *John* an *Ægyptian* Confeſſor (whom *Euſebius* ſaw and heard) that though both his *Eyes* were put out, and his Body mangled with unheard of Cruelty, yet he was able at any time to repeat any places or paſſages either out of the *Old* or *New* Teſtament; which when I firſt heard him do in the publick Congregation, I ſuppoſed him *(ſays he)* to have been reading in a Book, till coming near and finding how it was, I was ſtruck with great Admiration at it. Certainly Chriſtians then had no mean eſteem of, and took no ſmall delight in theſe Sacred Volumes. For the ſake of this Book (which he had choſen to be the *Companion* and *Counſellor* of his Life) *Nazianzen* profeſſes he had willingly undervalued and relinquiſhed all other things. This was the *Mine* where they enriched themſelves with Divine Treaſures, a Book where they furniſhed themſelves with a true Stock of Knowledg; as St. *Hierom* ſpeaks of *Nepotian*, that by daily reading and meditation he had made his Soul a *Library* of Chriſt: and he tells us of *Bleſilla* a devout Widow, that though ſhe was ſo far over-run with Weakneſs and Sickneſs, that her *Foot* would ſcarce bear her *Body*, or her *Neck* ſuſtain the Burden of her *Head*, yet ſhe was never found without a *Bible* in her *Hand*.

Ep. ad Marcell. tom. 1. p. 129.

Euſeb. de Martyr. Paleſt. c. 11. p. 336. Ib. c. ult. p. 334.

De pace, Or. 12. p. 193.

Epitaph. Nepot. nom. 1. p. 25. Ep. ad Paul. p. 157.

Nor

Nor did they covetously hoard up, and reserve this excellent Knowledg to *themselves*, but freely *communicated* it to others; especially were careful to *catechize* and instruct their Children and Servants in the Principles of Religion. St. *Clemens* praises the *Corinthians*, that they took care to admonish their young Men to follow those things that were modest and comely; and accordingly exhorts them to instruct the *younger* in the Knowledg of the Fear of God, to make their Children Partakers of the Discipline of Christ, to teach them how much Humility and a chaste Love do prevail with God; that the Fear of him is good, and useful, and preserves all those who with pure Thoughts lead a holy Life according to his Will. The *Historian* observes of *Constantine*, that his first and greatest care towards his *Sons* was, to secure the Happiness of their *Souls*, by sowing the Seeds of Piety in their Minds, which he did partly himself, instructing them in the Knowledg of Divine Things, and partly by appointing such *Tutors* as were most approved for Religion: and when he had taken them into a Partnership of the Government, and either by private Admonitions, or by Letters gave them Counsels for the steering themselves; this was always the first and chief, that they should prefer the Knowledg and Worship of *God*, the great *King* of the World, before all other Advantages, yea, before the *Empire* it self. For this *Nazianzen* peculiarly commends his Mother, that not only she her self was *consecrated* to God, and brought up under a pious Education, but that she conveyed it down as a necessary Inheritance to her *Children*; and it seems her Daughter *Gorgonia* was so well seasoned with these holy Principles, that she religiously walked in the Steps of so good a Pattern, and did not only reclaim her *Husband*, but educated her *Children* and *Nephews* in the ways of Religion, giving them an excel-

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Pag. 3.

Ib. p. 31.

De vit. Const. lib. 4. *c.* 51.

Ib. c. 52. *p.* 552.

In Laud. Cæsaris, Or. 10. *p.* 161.

Id. Or. 11. *p.* 80.

Part I. excellent Example while she *lived*, and leaving this as her last Charge and Request when she *died*. This was the *Discipline* under which *Christians* were brought up in those times; Religion was instilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed it self with their ordinary Labours and Recreations; insomuch that the most rude and illiterate Persons, instead of prophane wanton *Songs*, which *vitiate* and corrupt the Minds of Men, τὰς σαλαγικὰς ᾠδὰς, as *Chrysostom* calls them (*Songs of the Devil's composure*) used nothing but *spiritual* and divine *Hymns*: So that (as St. *Hierom* relates of the place where he lived) you could not go into the Field, but you might hear the *Plowman* at his *Hallelujahs*, the *Mower* at his *Hymns*, and the *Vine-dresser* singing *David*'s Psalms.

In Psalm. 117. *tom.* 3. *p.* 358. *Epist. ad Marcel. to.* 1. *p.* 127.

Thus they carried themselves at Home; what they did in Publick, in their *Church-Assemblies*, on the Lord's Day especially, is next to be considered: The manner whereof, I shall briefly represent, as it generally, and for the most part, obtained in those Ages; for it could not but vary something according to *time* and *place*. And here I should save my self the trouble of any farther Search, by setting down the Account which *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* give of their *publick* Worship, in their *Apologies* for the Christians; but that I am satisfied they did not design to give a perfect and punctual Account of what was done at their Religious Assemblies; as might sufficiently appear from this one thing, That the first of them, in those places, speaks not any thing of their *Hymns* and *Psalms*, which yet, that they were (even in the times wherein they lived) a constant part of the *Divine Service*, no Man that is not wholly a stranger in Church-Antiquity can be ignorant of. I shall therefore, out of them and others, pick up, and put together, what seems to have constituted the main Body of their Publick Duties,

ties, and represent them in that Order wherein they were performed, which usually was in this manner: At their first coming together into the *Congregation*, they began with Prayer, as *Tertullian* at least probably intimates (for I do not find it in any besides him;) We come together (says he) unto God, that being *banded* as 'twere into an *Army*, we may besiege him with our Prayers and Petitions; a *Violence* which is very pleasing and grateful to him. I do not from hence positively conclude, that Prayer was the first Duty they began with, though it seems fairly to look that way; especially if *Tertullian* meant to represent the Order as well as the Substance of their Devotions. After this followed the reading of the *Scriptures*, both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, both the *Commentaries* of the *Apostles*, and the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, as *Justin Martyr* informs us. How much of each was read at one Meeting in the first times, is not known, it being then unfixed and arbitrary; because their Meetings, by the sudden Interruption of the Heathens, were oft disturbed and broken up; and therefore both *Justin* and *Tertullian* confess, that they only read as much as *Occasion* served, and the *Condition* of the present times did require: But afterwards there were *set Portions* assigned, both out of the *Old* and *New Testament*, two *Lessons* out of each, as we find it in the Author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*. Nay, not only the *Canonical* Scriptures, but many of the Writings of *Apostolical* Men (such as were eminent for *Place* and *Piety*) were in those Days publickly read in the Church; such was the famous Epistle of St. *Clemens* to the *Corinthians*; of which, and of the Custom in like Cases, *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Corinth*, who lived about the year 172. gives *Soter*, Bishop of *Rome*, this account: *To Day* (says he) *we kept Holy the* Lord's Day, *wherein we read your* Epistle, *which we*

Chap. 9.

Apol. c. 39. *p.* 31.

Ap. 2. *p.* 98.

Lib. 2. *c.* 57. *p.* 875.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 23. *p.* 145.

Part. I. *shall* constantly *read for our Instruction, as we also do the first Epistle which* Clemens *wrote to us.* The like *Eusebius* reports of *Hermas*'s *Pastor* (a Book so called) and St. *Hierom* of the Writings of St. *Ephrem*, the famous Deacon of *Edessa*, that in some Churches they were publickly read after the reading of the Holy Scriptures. About this part of the Service it was that they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*, a considerable part of the Divine Worship, (as it had ever been accounted both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*) and more immediately serviceable for celebrating the Honour of God, and lifting up the Minds of Men to Divine and Heavenly Raptures. 'Twas in use in the very Infancy of the Christian Church, spoken of largely by St. *Paul*, and continued in all Ages after: Insomuch that *Pliny* reports it as the *main* Part of the Christians Worship, *that they met together before Day, to join in singing Hymns to Christ, as God.* These Hymns were either *extemporary* Raptures, so long as immediate *Inspiration* lasted; or *set* Compositions, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures or of their own composing, as *Tertullian* tells us. For it was usual then for any Persons to compose Divine Songs, to the Honour of *Christ*, and to sing them in the Publick Assemblies; till the Council of *Laodicea* ordered, that no *Psalms* composed by *private* Persons should be recited in the Church; where tho by the ἰδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοὶ, the two *Greek Scholiasts* will have certain *Psalms* ascribed to *Solomon* and others to be understood, yet it's much more reasonable to understand it of *private Compositions*, usual a long time in the Church, and here for good reason prohibited. By this Council it was likewise appointed, That the Psalms should not be one entire continued Service, but that a *Lesson* should be interposed in the midst, after every Psalm; which was done (as *Balsamon* and *Alexius Aristenus* tell us) to take off the Weariness

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 3. p. 72.

Descript. Eccl. in voc. Ephrem p. 300.

Lib. 10. ep. 97.

Ap. c. 39. p. 32.

Eus. l. 5. c. 28. p. 196.

Can. 17.

rineſs of the People, whoſe Minds might be apt to tire in paſſing through thoſe prolix Offices all together, eſpecially the Leſſons being ſo large and many. In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a part, joining all together in a common Celebration of the Praiſes of God; afterwards the Cuſtom was to ſing *alternatim*, courſe by courſe, anſwering one another; firſt brought in (as we are told) by *Flavianus* and *Diodorus* in the Church of *Antioch*, in the Reign of *Conſtantine:* But if we may believe *Socrates*, ſome hundred of years before that, by *Ignatius*, who was Biſhop of that Church; who having in a Viſion heard the *Angels* praiſing the *Holy Trinity* with *alternate* Hymns, thereupon introduced the uſe of it in that Church, which from thence ſpread it ſelf into all other Churches; and whether *Pliny* (who lived about that time) might not mean ſome ſuch thing by his *Secum invicem canere*, that the Chriſtians ſung Hymns *one with another*, or *in their Courſes*, may be conſidered by thoſe who think it worth their Labour to enquire. In the mean time we proceed: *The Reader having done*, (they are the words of *Juſtin* the *Martyr*) *the Preſident of the Aſſembly makes a Sermon by way of Inſtruction and Exhortation, to the Imitation and Practice of thoſe excellent Things that they had heard.* And indeed *Sermons*, in thoſe times, were nothing elſe but the *Expoſitions* of ſome part of the Scriptures which had been read before, and *Exhortations* to the People to obey the Doctrines contained in them; and commonly were upon the *Leſſon* which was *laſt* read, becauſe that being freſheſt in the Peoples Memory, was moſt proper to be treated of, as St. *Auguſtine* both avers the *Cuſtom*, and gives the *Reaſon*. Hence, in the Writers of the Church, Preachers came to be called *Tractatores*, and their Sermons *Tractatus*, becauſe they *handled* or treated of ſuch places of Scripture as had been a little

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Theod. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 24. p. 78.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. p. 313.

Loc. ſupra cit.

Serm. 237. de Temp. tom. 10. col. 1116.

Part I. little before read unto the People. According as occasion was, these Sermons were more or fewer, sometimes two or three at the same Assembly, made by the Presbyters first and then the Bishop; as is expressly affirmed in the *Apostolical Constitutions: Then* (i. e. after the reading of the *Gospel*) *let the Presbyters exhort the People one by one, not all at once; and after all, the Bishop, as it is fitting for the Master to do.* And thus *Gregory Nyssen* excuses himself for not introducing his Sermons with a tedious Preface, because he would not be burthensom to the People who had already taken pains to hear those admirable Discourses that had been made before him.

Vt supra, p. 870.

Ἐκ τῆς ἐπιτροπῆς χειροτονίας. Tom. 1. p. 872.

This Course they held not in the *Morning* only, but likewise in the *Afternoon* (at some times at least) when they had their publick Prayers and Sermons to the People. This *Chrysostom* assures us of, in an *Homily* upon this very Subject, in Commendation of those who came to Church *after Dinner*, and that, as he tells them, in greater numbers than before; who instead of *sleeping* after Dinner, came to hear the Divine Laws expounded unto them; instead of *walking upon the Exchange*, and entertaining themselves with idle and unprofitable Chat, came and stood amongst their Brethren, to converse with the Discourses of the *Prophets*. And this, he tells them, he puts them in mind of; not that it was a Reproach to *eat* and *drink*, but that having done so, it was a Shame to *stay at home*, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities. The same 'twere easy to make good from several Passages in St. *Basil*, St. *Augustine*, and others, who frequently refer to those Sermons which they had preached in the morning.

Ἑπτωὸς ἢ μετὰ τὸ ἄριστον ἐστὶν ἀπλουστέρων εἰς τὰ ἐκκλησιαστικά. Hom. 10. ad pop. Antioch. p. 115. Tom. 1.

But how many soever the Discourses were, the People were ready enough to entertain them, flocking to them as to their Spiritual Meals and Banquets.

We

We meet together (says *Tertullian*) *to hear the Holy Scriptures rehearsed to us, that so (according to the Quality of the times) we may be either fore-warned or corrected by them: For certainly with these Holy Words we nourish our* Faith, *erect our* Hope, *seal our* Confidence; *and, by these Inculcations, are the better established in Obedience to the Divine Commands.* Chap. 9. *Ap. c. 39.*

Nazianzen tells us, what vast Numbers used to meet in his Church at *Constantinople*, of all Sexes, of all Sorts and Ranks of Persons, *Rich* and *Poor*, *Honourable* and *Ignoble*, *Learned* and *Simple*, *Governours* and *People*, *Soldiers* and *Tradesmen*; all here unanimously conspiring together, and greedily desirous to learn the Knowledg of Divine Things. *Orat. 32. p. 517.*

The like *Chrysostom* reports of the Church of *Antioch*, that they would set aside all Affairs at home, to come and hear Sermons at Church; he tells them, 'twas the great *Honour* of the City, not so much that it had large *Suburbs* and vast *Numbers* of People, or brave *Houses* with gilded Dining-rooms, as that it had a *diligent* and *attentive* People. *Hom. 56. to. 1. p. 623.*

And elsewhere, that 'twas the great Encouragement of his Ministry, to see such a famous and chearful Concourse, a People so well ordered and desirous to hear: That 'twas this advanced their City above the Honour of a *Senate*, or the Office of a *Consul*, or the variety of *Statues* and Ornaments, or the Plenty of its *Merchandize*, or the Commodiousness of its *Situation*; in that its People were so earnest to hear and learn, its Churches so throng'd and crowded, and all Persons inflamed with such an insatiable Desire of the Word that was preached to them; yea, that this it was that adorned the City, even above *Rome* it self. *Hom. 4. in verb. Esai. vid. Dom. &c. tom. 3. p. 750.*

And indeed the Commendation is the greater, in that Commonness did not breed Contempt; it being usual in that Church (as *Chrysostom* often intimates) for a good part of the Year to have Sermons every Day.

Well

Part I.

Well, *Sermon* being ended, *Prayers* were made with and for the *Catechumens*, *Penitents*, *Possessed*, and the like, according to their respective Capacities and Qualifications; the Persons that were in every Rank departing as soon as the Prayer that particularly concerned them was done; first the *Catechumens*, and then the *Penitents*; as is prescribed in the nineteenth Canon of the *Laodicean* Council: For no sooner was the Service thus far performed, but all that were under Baptism, or under the Discipline of Penance, *i. e.* all that might not communicate at the *Lord's Table*, were commanded to depart, the *Deacon* crying aloud, ΟΣΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΧΟΥΜΕΝΟΙ ΠΡΟΕΛΘΕΤΕ, *Those that are Catechumens go out:* in the *Latin* Church the Form was, *ITE, MISSA EST*; *Depart, there is a Dismission of you: Missa* being the same with *Missio*, as *remissa* oft used in some Writers for *remissio*, (and so the word *Missa* is used by *Cassian* even in his time, for the dismission of the Congregation.) Hence it was that the whole Service, from the beginning of it till the time that the *Hearers* were *dismissed*, came to be called *Missa Catechumenorum*; the *Mass* or Service of the *Catechumens*; as that which was performed afterwards at the Celebration of the *Eucharist* was called *Missa Fidelium*, the *Mass*, or Service of the *Faithful*, because none but they were present at it: And in these Notions, and no other, the word is often to be met with in *Tertullian*, and other antient Writers of the Church. 'Tis true, that in process of Time, as the Discipline of the *Catechumens* wore out, so that Title which belonged to the first part of the Service was forgotten, and the Name *Missa* was appropriated to the Service of the *Lord's Supper*: and accordingly was made use of by the Church of *Rome*, to denote that which they peculiarly call the *Mass*, or the *Propitiatory* Sacrifice of the *Altar*, at this day. And the more plausibly

Constit. Apost. l. 8. c. 6. p. 1006.

De Instit. Monach. l. 3. c. 7. p. 26.

plausibly to impose this Delusion upon the People, they do, with a great deal of Confidence, muster up all those places of the Fathers where the word *Missa* is to be found, and apply it to their *Mass*; tho it would puzzle them to produce but one place, where the word is used in the same sense as they use it now, out of any genuine and approved Writer of the Church, for at least the first four hundred Years. But to return: The *Catechumens*, &c. being departed, and the Church-doors shut, they proceeded to the *Lord's Supper*, at which the *Faithful* only might be present; wherein they prayed for all States and Ranks of Men, gave the *Kiss* of Charity, pray'd for *Consecration* of the *Eucharist*, then received the Sacramental Elements, made their Offerings, and such like; of which I do not now speak particularly, because I intend to treat distinctly of the *Sacraments* afterwards. For the same reason, I say nothing concerning their *Admonitions*, *Church-Censures*, *Absolutions*, &c. because these will come under Consideration in another place; as also, because though managed at their Publick Assemblies, they were yet only accidental to them, and no settled parts of the Divine Service. This, in short, was the general Form of Publick Worship in those antient times; which, although it might vary somewhat according to *Times* and *Places*, did yet for the main and the substance of it hold in all. Chap. 9.

That which remains, is, a little to remark how the *Christians* carried themselves in the discharge of these solemn Duties; which certainly was with singular *Reverence* and *Devotion*, such *Gestures* and *Actions* as they conceived might express the greatest *Piety* and *Humility*. Let both Men and Women (says *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) come to Church in *comely* Apparel, with a *grave* Pace, with a modest *Silence*, with a *Love* unfeigned, *chaste* both in Body and Mind, and *Pædag. l.3 c.11.p.255*

Part I. and so as they may be fit to put up Prayers to God. Let our *Speech* in Prayer (says *Cyprian*) be under Discipline, observing a *decorous* Calmness and Modesty: We are to remember that we are under the Eye of God, whom we are not to offend either in the *Habit* of our Body, or the *Manner* of our Speech; for as 'tis the Fashion of those that are impudent to clamour and make a noise; so on the contrary, it becomes a sober Man to pray with a *modest* Voice. When therefore we come together with our Brethren into the Assembly, to celebrate the Divine *Sacrifices*, with the Minister of God, we ought to be mindful of *Order*, and a reverent regard, and not to throw about our Prayers with a *wild* and *confused* Voice, or with a disorderly prattling, to cast forth those Petitions which ought with the greatest Modesty to be put up to God. The Men prayed with their *Heads bare*, as not ashamed to look up to Heaven for what they begged of God; the Women *covered*, as a sign of the *Modesty* of that Sex: and therefore *Tertullian* severely checks the Practice of some Women in his time, who in time of Worship had no Covering on their Heads, or what was as good as none: What Reproof (says he) do they deserve, that continue *unveiled* in singing Psalms, or in any mention of God? Or do they think it's enough to lay some thin and slight thing over their Heads in Prayer, and then think themselves covered? Where he manifestly refers to those Rules which the Apostle prescribes in this case; and concludes at last, that they should at all times and in all places, be mindful of the Rule, being ready and provided against all mentions of the Name of God; who if he be in Womens *Hearts*, will be known on their *Heads*, *viz.* by a modest *Carriage* and *Covering* of them in their Addresses to him. Their Hands they did not only lift up to Heaven (a Posture in Prayer common both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*)

De Orat. Dom. p. 188

De Virg. veland. p. 504.

Gentiles) but they did *expand* and spread them abroad, that so by this means they might shadow out an *Image of the Cross*, or rather a Resemblance of him that hung upon it, as *Tertullian* more than once and again informs us. Prayer (says another) is a Conversing with God, and the Way to Heaven; and to stretch out our Hands, is to form the Resemblance of *Christ Crucified*, which, whoever prays, should do, not only as to the Form and Figure, but in Reality and Affection: For as he that is fastened to the Cross surely dies; so he that prays should *crucify* the Desires of the Flesh, and every inordinate Lust and Passion. In the performing of this Duty, they either *kneeled* (which was most usual) or *stood*, which they always did upon the *Lord's Day*, for a reason which we have spoken of before; *sitting* was ever held a posture of great *Rudeness* and *Irreverence*. Nay, *Tertullian* falls heavy upon some that used presently to clap themselves down upon their Seats, as soon as ever Prayer was done, and down-right charges it as against Scripture: If it be an irreverent thing (as he argues) to sit down before, or over against a Person for whom thou hast a mighty Reverence and Veneration, how much more does it savour of *Irreligion* to do so in the Presence of the *living God*, while the *Angel* is yet standing by thee to carry up the Prayer to Heaven? unless we have a mind to *reproach* God to his face, and tell him that we are weary of the Duty.

Chap. 9.

De Orat. c. 11. *Apol. c.* 39. *Asterius Amasen. Hom. de precat. apud Phot. Cod.* 271. *col.* 1496.

De Orat. c. 12. *p.* 134.

Another Custom which they had in Prayer, was, that they constantly prayed towards the *East*. This was so universally common, that there's scarce any antient Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; though not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. The Custom doubtless begun very early, and is generally ascribed to the *Apostles*; so the Author of the *Questions* and *Answers* assures us, and tells us, it was because the *East* was accounted the most excellent

Quest. 118. *p.* 471.

Part I.

cellent part of the Creation; and seeing in Prayer we must turn our Faces towards some Quarter, 'twas fittest it should be towards the *East*. Just (says he) as in making the Sign of the *Cross* in the Name of *Christ*, we use the Right Hand, because 'tis better than the Left, not in its own Nature, but only in its *Posiure* and *Fitness* for our use. St. *Basil* likewise reckons it amongst the *Traditions* that had been derived from the *Apostles*; but tells us the *Mystery* of it was, that hereby they respected *Paradise*, which God planted in the *East*, begging of him that they might be restored to that antient Country from whence they had been cast out. This might probably be with those who dwelt in the *Western* Parts of the World; but how it could be done by those who lived *East* of the Garden of *Eden* (suppose in any parts of *India*) I am not able to imagine. *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that herein they had respect to *Christ*: for as the *East* is the Birth and Womb of the Natural Day, from whence the *Sun* (the Fountain of all sensible Light) does arise and spring; so *Christ* the true *Sun of Righteousness*, who arose upon the World with the *Light* of Truth, when it sat in the *Darkness* of Error and Ignorance, is in Scripture stiled the *East*; and therefore our Prayers are directed thither. For which reason, *Tertullian* calls the *East* the *Figure*, or the *Type* of *Christ*. But whatever the true Reason was, I'm sure 'tis a sober account which *Athanasius* gives of it: *We do not* (says he) *worship towards the* East, *as if we thought God any ways shut up in those Parts of the World, but because God is in himself, and is so stiled in Scripture, the* true Light: *in turning therefore towards that* created Light, *we do not worship it, but the great* Creator *of it; taking* occasion *from that most excellent Element to adore that God who was before all Elements and Ages of the World.* This was their Carriage for Prayer; nor were

De Spir. S. c. 27. p. 352. to. 2. Athanas. ad Antioch. quest. 37. p. 285. tom. 2. Const Ap. l. 2. c. 57. p. 876.

Strom. l. 7. p. 724.

Contra Valent. c. 3. p. 251.

Ubi supr. p. 284.

were they less humble and reverent in other parts of Worship; they heard the Scriptures read and preached with all possible *Gravity* and *Attention*; which that they might the better do, they were wont to *stand* all the while the *Sermon* continued, none sitting then but the Bishop and Presbyters that were about him. So *Optatus* expressly tells us, That the People had no Privilege to *sit down* in the Church; though whether the Custom was universally so in all Places, I much doubt. Nay, St. *Augustine* tells us, That in some *transmarine* (I suppose he means the *Western*) Churches it was otherwise, the *People* having Seats placed for them as well as the *Ministers*. But generally the People *stood*, partly to express the greater *Reverence*, partly to keep their Attentions *awake* and *lively*. Hence it was part of the *Deacon*'s Office (as *Chrysostom* tells us, and the same we find in the antient *Greek Liturgies*) to call upon the People with an ΟΡΘΟΙ ΣΤΩΜΕΝ ΚΑΛΩΣ, *Let us duly stand upright*; respecting the *decent* Posture of their *Bodies*, though withal principally intending the *elevation* of their *Minds*, the lifting up their Thoughts from low sordid Objects, to those Spiritual and Divine Things they were then conversant about. But whatever they did in other parts of the Publick Service, they constantly stood up at the reading of the *Gospel*; a Custom generally embraced in all parts of the Christian World. Therefore *Sozomen*, discoursing of the various Rites observed in several Churches, notes it as an unusual thing in the Bishop of *Alexandria*, that he did not rise up when the Gospels were read; a thing (says he) which I never saw nor heard of in any other place. And *Philostorgius* tells us of *Theophilus*, the *Indian* Bishop, that amongst several *Irregularities* which he corrected in those Churches, he particularly reformed this, that the People were wont to *sit* while the *Lessons* out of the Gospel were read to them.

Chap. 9.

De Schism. Donat. l. 4. p. 115.

De Catech. Rudib. c. 13. tom. 4. col. 907.

De incomparab. Dei natur. hom. 4. p. 353. tom. 1.

Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 19. p. 734.

Hist. Eccl. l. 3. num. 5. p. 29.

Part I. them. Nor did the greateſt Perſonages think themſelves too high to expreſs this piece of Reverence in their Attendance upon the King of Kings. 'Tis very memorable what we read concerning the great *Conſtantine*, that when upon occaſion *Euſebius* was to make a *Panegyrick* concerning the *Sepulcher* of our Saviour, though it was not in the *Church*, but in the *Palace*, yet he refuſed to *ſit* all the time: and when *Euſebius* beſeeched him to ſit down in his *Throne*, that was hard by him, he would not; but attentively heard, judged, and approved thoſe things that were ſpoken. And when after a good while, the *Sermon* having been prolix, *Euſebius* out of compliance would have broken off and done, he called to him to go on till he came to the full end of his Diſcourſe: whereupon he was again ſollicited to ſit down, but refuſed, *Affirming it to be unfit to attend upon any Diſcourſe concerning God, and much more at this time, with eaſe and ſoftneſs: and that it was very conſonant to Piety and Religion, that Diſcourſes about Divine things ſhould be heard ſtanding.* So great a Reverence had that *excellent* Prince for the Solemnities of Divine Worſhip. In the diſcharge of theſe holy Exerciſes, as they carried themſelves with all Seriouſneſs and Gravity, ſo they *continued* in them till they were compleatly *finiſhed*; there was then no ſuch Airineſs and Levity as now poſſeſſes the Minds of Men; no *ſnatching* at ſome pieces of the Worſhip, *tanquam Canis ad Nilum*, and gone again; no rude diſorderly departing the Congregation, till the whole Worſhip and Service of God was over. And therefore when this warmth and vigour of the firſt Ages was a little abated, the Council of *Orleans* thought good to reeſtabliſh the Primitive Devotion by this Canon, *That when the People came together for the Celebration of Divine Service, they ſhould not depart till the whole Solemnity was over, and the Biſhop or Presbyter had given the Bleſſing.*

De vit. Conſt. l. 4. c. 33. p. 542.

Can. 22.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the Primitive Church.

Four Circumstances considered. Baptism, by whom administred. By none usually without the leave of the Bishop. The great Controversy about re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Hereticks. An account of it out of Cyprian. *Lay-men how suffered to baptize. The Opinion of the absolute Necessity of Baptism. The Case of* Athanasius's *baptizing when but a Child. Women never permitted to baptize. Persons to be baptized, who. Infants. Sufficient Evidence for Infant-Baptism in the antient Writers of the Church. Some Passages out of* Cyprian *noted. The baptized most-what Adult Persons. The stated times of Baptism,* Easter *and* Whitsuntide, *and why: Especially upon* Easter-Eve, *and why. In cases of Necessity at any other time.* Clinici, *who. Clinic Baptism accounted less perfect, why. Usual to defer Baptism till a Death-bed, and the reason of it noted in* Constantine *and others.* Being baptized for the Dead, *what (probably.) The usual place of Baptism in, or near the Church; always before the Congregation. The* Baptisterium *or Font, where it stood, and how large. Its distinct Apartments for Men and Women. A Curiosity in many of those times*

Part. I.

of being baptized in Jordan, *and why. The manner of the Administration. The Person baptized looked towards the West, and why. Their answering as to the Profession of their Faith. Their solemn Abrenunciation made twice, and the form of it. Sureties in Baptism. Persons baptized Exorcised; what meant by it. Unction, upon what account used; several reasons of it assigned by the Fathers. The sign of the Cross made in Baptism, evident out of the Antient Fathers. Of Immersion or putting the Person under Water; what it shadowed out. Genenerally in use in those Countries: Not absolutely necessary in others. Trine Immersion: Different Reasons of it assigned by the Fathers. It obtained not in* Spain, *and why. A second Unction. Persons after Baptism clothed in white Garments, and why. These kept in the Church as a Testimony of their solemn Engagement. A memorable Instance out of* Victor Uticensis. *A brief Account of Confirmation. The neglect of it bewailed.*

OUR Lord having instituted *BAPTISM* and the *LORD'S SUPPER*, as the two great *Sacraments* of the *Christian* Law, they have accordingly been ever accounted principal parts of Publick Worship in the Christian Church: We shall treat first of *Baptism*, as being the *Door* by which Persons enter in, the great and solemn Rite of our Initiation into the Faith of Christ; concerning which, four Circumstances are chiefly to be inquired into; the *Persons* by, and upon whom; the *Time* when, the *Place* where,

where, the *Manner* how this Sacrament was administred in the antient Church. Chap. 10

For the *Persons* by whom this Sacrament was administred, they were the *Ministers of the Gospel*, the *Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ*, baptizing and preaching the Gospel being joined together by our *Saviour* in the same Commission: Usually 'twas done by the Bishop, the προεστὼς in *J. Martyr*, the *Antistes* in *Tertullian*, the *President* or chief Minister of the Congregation, the *Summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus*, as he calls him, without whose Leave and Authority neither *Presbyters* nor *Deacons* might take upon them to *baptize*, as not only *Ignatius* but *Tertullian* expresly tells us; and if they did, it was only in case of necessity, as is affirmed by an antient Author, who lived in or near the time of *Cyprian*. The same, St. *Hierom* assures us, was the Custom of his time; though otherwhiles we find the Bishop to begin the Action, and the Presbyters to carry it on and finish it. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar part of the *Presbyters* and the *Deacons* Office, and doubtless had been more or less executed by them from the beginning; though out of Reverence to the Bishop, and to preserve the *Honour* of the Church (as *Tertullian* gives the reason) they did it not without his *leave* and deputation: and 'tis certain, that *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, who yet was of no higher Order than that of *Deacon*. Nor was it accounted enough by some in those times, that Baptism was conferred by a Person called to the Ministry, unless he was also *orthodox* in the Faith. This became matter of great bustle in the Church: Hence sprang that famous Controversy between *Cyprian* and *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, concerning the *re-baptizing* those that had been baptized by *Hereticks*, (of which there is so much in *Cyprian*'s Writings) *Cyprian* asserting, that they ought to be re-

Epist. ad Smyrneos, p. 6. De Bap. c. 17. p. 230. De non rebapt. apud Cypr. p. 138 Dial. adv. Lucifer. p. 139. Ambr. de Sacram. l. 3. c. 1.

Part I. baptized, the other as ſtifly maintaining it to be both againſt the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of the Church. This begot great Heats and Feuds between thoſe good Men, and engaged a great part of the whole Chriſtian Church in the Quarrel; *Cyprian* endeavouring to ſtrengthen his Cauſe, not only by Arguments from Scripture, but by calling a Council at *Carthage* of eighty ſeven *African Biſhops*, who all concluded for his Opinion. How truly *Cyprian* maintained this, I am not concerned to enquire; only I take notice of two things which he and his Followers pleaded, by way of Abatement to the *rigour* of their Opinion. First, that hereby they did not aſſert *Re-baptization* to be lawful, this they expreſly deny to receive any Patronage from their Practice; for they looked upon that Baptiſm that had been conferred by Hereticks as *null* and *invalid*, (ſeeing Hereticks being out of the Church could not *give* what they *had* not) and therefore when any returned to the Union of the Church, they could not properly be ſaid to be re-baptized, ſeeing they did but receive what *(lawfully)* they had not before. Secondly, That they did not promiſcuouſly baptize all that came over from Heretical Churches; for where any had been lawfully baptized, by *Orthodox* Miniſters before their going over to them, theſe they received at their return without any other Ceremony than *Impoſition of Hands*; baptizing thoſe only who never had any other Baptiſm than that which Hereticks had conferred upon them. *Cyprian* being thus ſevere againſt Baptiſm diſpenſed by *Heretical* Miniſters, we may wonder what he thought of that which was adminiſtred by mere *Lay un-ordained Perſons*, which yet was not uncommon in thoſe times: for that Lay-men (provided they were Chriſtians and baptized themſelves) might, and did baptize others in caſes of Neceſſity, is ſo poſitively aſſerted by *Tertullian*, *Hieram*, and others,

Cypr. ep. ad Quint. de hæret. bapt. ep. 71. p. 119. & Conc. Carth. apud Cypr. ſent. 35. p. 286.

Cypr. ib. & Conc. Carth. ſent. 8. & Cyril. præf. Catech. ad Illum. p. 9.

Locis antea citat.

others, that no Man can doubt of it. A Cuſtom ratified by the Fathers of the *Illiberine* Council, with this *Proviſo*, That if the Perſons ſo baptized, lived, they ſhould receive *Confirmation* from the Biſhop. This, without queſtion, aroſe from an Opinion they had, of the abſolute and indiſpenſible *neceſſity* of Baptiſm, without which they ſcarce thought a Man's future Condition could be ſafe; and that therefore 'twas better it ſhould be had from any, than to depart this Life without it: for, excepting the caſe of *Martyrs*, (whom they thought ſufficiently qualified for Heaven, by being *baptized* in their own *Blood*, inſiſting upon a two-fold Baptiſm, one of *Water* in time of Peace, another of *Blood* in the time of Perſecution, anſwerable to the *Water* and *Blood* that flowed out of our *Saviour*'s Side: Excepting theſe) they reckoned no Man could be ſaved without being baptized, and cared not much in Caſes of Neceſſity, ſo they had it, how they came by it. As for the Act of *Athanaſius* (mentioned by the Author of his Life, in *Photius*, and more largely related by *Sozomen*) when a Boy, playing with the reſt of his Companions, they formed themſelves into a kind of Church-ſociety, *Athanaſius* was choſen Biſhop, and others perſonated the *Catechumens*, ready to be baptized; and were accordingly, with all the uſual Formalities, baptized by *Athanaſius*. This Juvenile Ceremony being ended, they were brought before *Alexander*, the then Biſhop of *Alexandria*, (who had himſelf beheld the whole *Scene*) who inquiring into the Reaſons and Circumſtances of the Action; and having conſulted with his Clergy that were about him, concluded that thoſe Children ought not to be *re-baptized*, and therefore only added his Confirmation to them. But this being only a particular Caſe, and the like not mentioned, that I remember, by any Writer of thoſe times, I only relate it as I find it. But

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Can. 38.

Cyril. ad Illum. Catech. 3. *p.* 61.

Cod. 258. *col.* 1429. *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 2. *c.* 17. *p.* 467.

Part I. though this Power, in Cases of Necessity, was allowed to *Men* (who were capable of having the Ministerial Office conferred upon them) yet was it ever denied to *Women*, whom the Apostle has so expressly forbidden to exercise any Ministry *in the Church of God*; and accordingly censured in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, to be not only *dangerous*, but *unlawful* and *impious*. Indeed in the Churches of the Hereticks, Women even in those times took upon them to baptize; but it was universally condemned and cryed out against by the Orthodox, and constantly affixed as a Note of Dishonour and Reproach upon the Heretical Parties of those times; as abundantly appears from *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, and others, who record the Heretical Doctrines and Practices of those first Ages of the Church: however afterwards it crept in, in some Places, and is allowed and practised in the Church of *Rome* at this Day; where in Cases of Necessity, they give leave that it may be administred by any, and in any Language, whether the Person administring be a *Clergy* or a *Lay-man*, (yea though under *Excommunication*) whether he be a *Believer* or an *Infidel*, a *Catholick* or an *Heretick*, a *Man* or a *Woman*; only taking care, that (if it may be) a *Priest* be preferred before a *Deacon*, a *Deacon* before a *Sub-deacon*, a *Clergyman* before a *Laic*, and a *Man* before a *Woman*; together with some other Cases which are there wisely provided for.

Tert. de Bapt. c. 17. De vel. virg. c. 9. De præscr. adv. hæret. c. 41. Epiph. hær. 49. & hær. 79.

Ritu. Rom. de Sacram. Baptism. Rubric. de minist. Bapt. p. 9.

From the Persons *ministring*, we proceed to the Persons upon whom it was *conferred*; and they were of two sorts, *Infants* and *Adult* Persons. How far the Baptizing of Infants is included in our *Saviour*'s Institution, is not my work to dispute; but certainly, if in controverted Cases the constant Practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles, be (as no Man can deny it is) the best Interpreter of the Laws of *Christ*, the Dispute one would think

think ſhould be at an end: For that it always was the Cuſtom to receive the Children of *Chriſtian Parents* into the Church by Baptiſm, we have ſufficient evidence from the greateſt part of the moſt early Writers, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, &c. whoſe Teſtimonies I do not produce, becauſe I find them collected by others, and the Argument thence ſo forcible and concluſive, that the moſt zealous Oppoſers of *Infant-Baptiſm* know not how to evade it; the Teſtimonies being ſo clear, and not the leaſt ſhadow that I know of in thoſe times of any thing to make againſt it. There was indeed in *Cyprian*'s time a Controverſy about the baptizing of Infants, not *whether* they ought to be baptized (for of that there was no doubt) but concerning the *time* when it was to be adminiſtred; whether on the *ſecond*, or *third*, or whether, as *Circumciſion* of old, to be deferred till the *eighth* Day. For the determining of which, *Cyprian*, ſitting in Council with ſixty ſix Biſhops, writes a *Synodical* Epiſtle to *Fidus*, to let him know, That it was not neceſſary to be deferred ſo long, and that it was their univerſal Judgment and Reſolution, that the *Mercy* and *Grace* of God was not to be denied to any, though as ſoon as he was *born*: Concluding, that it was the Sentence of the Council, that none ought to be forbidden Baptiſm and the Grace of God; which as it was to be obſerved and retained towards all Men, ſo *much more* towards *Infants* and *new-born* Children. And that this Sentence of theirs was no *novel* Doctrine, St. *Auguſtine* aſſures us, where ſpeaking concerning this *Synodical* Determination, he tells us, that in this *Cyprian* did not make any new Decree, but kept the Faith of the Church moſt firm and ſure. I ſhall only take notice of one place more out of *Cyprian*, which methinks evidently makes for this purpoſe; where deſcribing the great Wickedneſs and miſerable

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J. G. Voſſ. de Bapt. diſp. 14. p. 178. & ſeq. Forbeſ. Inſtruct. Hiſt. Theol. l. 10. c. 5. ſect. 14. & ſeq. Dr. Hammond's Defence of Infant-Baptiſm, c. 4. ſect. 2.

Ep. 60. p. 97.

Ep. 28. ad. Hierom. to. 2. col. 108.

De lapſis, p. 171.

Part I. ble Condition of the *lapsed*, such as to avoid Persecution had done sacrifice to the Idols, he urges this as one of the last and highest Aggravations, That by their Apostacy their Infants and Children were exposed to Ruin, and *had lost that which they had obtained at their first coming into the World* (which whether he means it of their *Right* to Baptism, or their having been actually baptized, and losing the *Fruit* and *Benefit* of their Baptism, is all one to my purpose) and therefore he brings them in thus elegantly pleading against their *Parents* at the Great Day: *'Twas no Fault of ours, we did not of our selves forsake the Sacraments of our Lord, and run over to join with prophane Impieties; the Unfaithfulness of others has undone us, we have found our Parents to be Murderers; they denied us God for our Father, and the Church for our Mother: for while we alas were little, unable to take any care of our selves, and ignorant of so great a Wickedness, we were ensnared by the Treachery of others, and by them betrayed into a Partnership of their Impieties!*

This was the Case of Infants; but those who made up the main Body of the baptized in those Days were *adult* Persons, who flocking over daily in great numbers to the Faith of Christ, were received in at this door. Usually they were for some considerable time *catechized*, and trained up in the Principles of the Christian Faith, till having given Testimony of their Proficiency in Knowledg (to the Bi-
Conc. Laod. Can. 46. shop or Presbyter, who were appointed to take their Examination, and to whom they were to give an account once a Week of what they had learnt) and of a sober and regular Conversation, they then became *Candidates* for Baptism, and were accordingly taken in: which brings me to the next Circumstance considerable, concerning,

The *Time* when Baptism was wont to be administred. At first all times were alike, and Persons were

were baptized as opportunity and occasion served; but the Discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two solemn and stated times of the Year, *viz. Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. At *Easter*, in memory of Christ's *Death* and *Resurrection*, correspondent unto which are the two parts of the Christian Life represented and shadowed out in Baptism, *dying* unto Sin, and *rising* again unto newness of Life; in order to which, the Parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict observation of *Lent*, disposing and fitting themselves for Baptism by Fasting and Prayer. In some places, particularly the Churches of *Thessaly*, *Easter* was the only time for *Baptism* (as *Socrates* tells us) which was the reason why many amongst them died *unbaptized*: But this was an Usage peculiar to them alone. The antient Custom of the Church (as *Zonaras* tells us) was for Persons to be baptized, especially upon the *Saturday* before *Easter-day*; the reason whereof was, that this being the *great* or *holy Sabbath*, and the mid-time between the Day whereon Christ was buried, and that whereon he rose again, did fitliest correspond with the Mystery of Baptism, as it is the Type and Representation both of our Lord's *Burial* and *Resurrection*. At *Whitsuntide*, in memory of the *Holy Ghost*'s being shed upon the *Apostles*; the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in Baptism. When I say that these were the two fixed times of Baptism, I do not strictly mean it of the precise Days of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, but also of the whole intermediate space of fifty Days that is between them, which was in a manner accounted *Festival*, and Baptism administred during the whole time, as I have formerly noted. Besides these, *Nazianzen* reckons the Feast of *Epiphany* as an annual time of Baptism, probably in Memory either of the *Birth* or *Baptism* of our Saviour,

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Tert. de Bapt. c. 19. p. 232.

Cyril. præf. Catech. ad Illum. p. 6.

Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 22. p. 287.

In Can. 45. Conc. Laod.

Εἰς τὸ ἅγ. βαπτ. *Orat. 40. p. 654.*

Part I. Saviour, both which antiently went under that Title. This might be the Custom in some places, but I question whether it was universal; besides that, afterwards it was prohibited and laid aside. But though Persons in health, and the space that was requisite for the Instruction of the *Catechumens*, might well enough comport with these annual Returns; yet if there was a *necessity* (as in case of *Sickness* and danger of *Death*) they might be baptized at any other time. For finding themselves at any time surprized with a dangerous or a mortal Sickness, and not daring to pass into another World without this *Badg* of their Initiation into Christ; they presently signified their earnest Desire to be baptized, which was accordingly done, as well as the Circumstances of a sick Bed would permit. These were called *Clinici* (of whom there is frequent mention in the antient Writers of the Church) because ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ βαπτιζόμενοι, baptized as they lay along in their Beds. This was accounted a less solemn and perfect kind of Baptism, partly because 'twas done not by *Immersion*, but by *Sprinkling*; partly because Persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a *Fear* of Death, and many times when not thorowly *Masters* of their Understandings. For which reasons Persons so baptized (if they recovered) are by the Fathers of the *Neocæsarean* Council
Can. 12. rendered ordinarily incapable of being admitted to the Degree of *Presbyters* in the Church. Indeed 'twas very usual in those times (notwithstanding that the Fathers did solemnly and smartly declaim against it) for Persons to defer their being baptized till they were near their Death, out of a kind of *Novatian* Principle, that if they fell into Sin after Baptism, there would be no place for Repentance; mistaking that place of the *Apostle*, where 'tis said, that

that *if they who have been once enlightened,* (ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας, which the Antients generally understand of *Baptism*) *fall away, 'tis impossible to renew them again unto Repentance.* For some such reason we may suppose it was, that *Constantine* the Great deferred his Baptism till he lay a dying; the same which *Socrates* relates of his Son *Constantius*, baptized a little before his Death. And the like he reports of the Emperor *Theodosius*, who apprehending himself to be arrested with a mortal Sickness, presently caused himself to be baptized, though he recovered afterwards. To this Custom of *Clinic Baptism*, some not improbably think the Apostle has reference in that famous place, where he speaks of those that are *baptized for the Dead,* ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, which they expound with reference to the *State of the Dead*; and that 'tis meant of such, who in danger of Death would be baptized, that it might fare well with them after Death. This *Epiphanius* thinks the truest Interpretation, that it's meant of *Catechumens*; who being suddenly surprized with Death, would be baptized, that so their Sins being remitted in Baptism, they might go hence under the hope of that eternal Life which awaits good Men after Death, and testify their Belief and Expectation of their future happy Resurrection. Others think it may refer to the place of Baptism, those who are baptized ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν, *over the Graves* or Sepulchers of the Dead; it being an antient and general Custom to have their religious Meetings, and to perform their publick Exercises at the *Tombs* of *Martyrs*; there being numerous Instances in the *Acts* of the *Martyrs*, of such as were baptized in the *Cœmiteria* over the *Monuments* of the *Dead.* Which soever of these is most suitable, yet certainly either of them is far more probable than that which many talk so much of, as if the Apostle meant it of a *Custom* common in those Primitive

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Euseb. de vit. Const. l. 4. c. 61, 62. p. 557. Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 47. p. 161. Lib. 5. c. 6. p. 262. Vid. Voss. Thes. de Baptism. p. 161. & de Resur. Thes. 18.

Hæres. 28. p. 54. Vid. Mat. Blast. Syntag. c. 1. lit. B. p. 41.

Vid. Prud. Peristeph. hymn. 8. p. 110.

Part I.

tive Times amongst the *Cerinthians*, and other Hereticks; where when any died without Baptism, they used to place another under his *Bed*, who was baptized for him in his stead, whence *Tertullian* calls it a *vicarious Baptism:* it being highly improbable, That the great Apostle would fetch an Argument to confirm so solemn and fundamental a Principle of the Christian Faith, as the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* is, from such an absurd and ridiculous Rite, used only by the *worst* of Hereticks. But this only by the way.

Vid. Epiph. hæres. 28. *contra Corinth. p.* 54.

De resur. carn. c. 48.

For the *Place* where this solemn Action was performed, it was first unlimited, any Place where there was Water, as *Justin Martyr* tells us, in Ponds or Lakes, at Springs or *Rivers*, as *Tertullian* speaks; but always as near as might be to the Place of their Publick Assemblies, for it was seldom done without the Presence of the *Congregation:* and that for very good reason, both as 'tis a principal Act of religious Worship, and as 'tis the initiating of Persons into the Church, which therefore ought to be as publick as it could, that so the whole Congregation might be Spectators and Witnesses of that Profession and Engagement which the Person baptized then took upon him. And this they so zealously kept to, that the *Trullan* Council allows not Baptism to be administred in a private *Chappel*, but only in the publick Churches; punishing the Persons offending, if *Clergy* with *Deposition*, if *Laity* with *Excommunication:* which yet (as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* expound the *Canon*) is to be understood, unless it be done with the Leave and Approbation of the Bishop of the *Diocess*. For this reason they had afterwards their *Baptisteria*, or (as we call them) *Fonts*, built at first near the Church, then in the Church-Porch, to represent Baptism's being the *entrance* into the mystical Church; afterwards they were placed in the Church it self.

Ap. 2. *p.* 93. *De Bapt. c.* 4.

Can. 59.

They

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They were uſually very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general Cuſtoms of thoſe Times, of Perſons baptized being *immerſed* or put under Water; but becauſe the ſtated times of Baptiſm returning ſo ſeldom, great Multitudes were uſually baptized at the ſame time. In the middle of the *Font* there was a *Partition*, the one part for Men, the other for Women, that to avoid Offence and Scandal they might be baptized aſunder. Here it was that this great Rite was commonly performed, tho in caſes of neceſſity they diſpenſed with private Baptiſm, as in the caſe of thoſe that were *ſick* or ſhut up in Priſon, of which there were frequent Inſtances in times of Perſecution. Many there were in thoſe days (ſuch eſpecially as lived in the Parts near unto it) whom nothing would ſerve, unleſs they might be baptized in *Jordan*, out of a Reverence to that place where our *Saviour* himſelf had been baptized: this, *Conſtantine* tells us, he had a long time reſolved upon to be baptized in *Jordan*, though God cut him ſhort of his Deſire. And *Euſebius* elſewhere relates, that at *Bethabara*, *beyond* Jordan, *where* John *baptized*, there was a place whither very many, even in his time, uſed to reſort, earneſtly deſiring to obtain their Baptiſm in that place. This doubtleſs proceeded from a very devout and pious Mind, though otherwiſe one place can contribute nothing more than another; nothing being truer than what *Tertullian* has obſerved in this caſe, *That it's no matter whether we be baptized among thoſe whom* John *baptized in* Jordan, *or whom* Peter *baptized in* Tyber.

De vita Conſt. l. 4. c. 62. Euſeb. de loc. Heb. in voce Βηθαβαρα. *p.* 59.

De Bapt. c. 4. p. 225.

The laſt Circumſtance I propounded, concerns the manner of the Celebration of this Sacrament, and for this we may obſerve, that in the *Apoſtles* Age Baptiſm was adminiſtred with great Nakedneſs and Simplicity, probably without any more Formality than a ſhort Prayer, and repeating the Words of Inſtitution:

Part I. Institution: And indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast Numbers that many times were then baptized at once. But After-ages added many Rites, differing very often according to Time and Place: I shall not undertake to give an account of all, but only of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those times; keeping as near as I can to the order which they observed in the Administration, which usually was thus: Persons having past through the State of the *Catechumens*, and being now ripe for *Baptism*, made it their request to the Bishop that they may be baptized: whereupon, at the solemn times they were brought to the entrance of the *Baptistery* or *Font*, and standing with their Faces towards the *West* (which being directly opposite to the *East*, the place of *Light*, did symbolically represent the Prince of *Darkness*, whom they were to renounce and defy) were commanded to stretch out their hand as it were in defiance of him. In this posture they were interrogated by the Bishop concerning their breaking off all their former Leagues and Commerce with Sin, and the Powers of Hell, the *Bishop* asking, *Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his Works, Powers, and Service?* To which the Party answered, *I do renounce them. Dost thou renounce the World, and all its Pomps and Pleasures?* Answ. *I do renounce them.* This *Renunciation* was made twice, once before the *Congregation* (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized) and presently after at the *Font*, or place of Baptism, as *Tertullian* witnesses. Next, they make an open *Confession* of their Faith, the Bishop asking, *Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty*, &c. *in Jesus Christ his only Son, who*, &c. *dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholick Church, and in one Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, and Life Everlasting?* To all which the Person answered,

Cyril. Hieros. Catech. myst. 1. p. 506. & seq. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 253. Ambr. de Sacram. l. 1. c. 2. tom. 4. p. 429.

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. De Spect. c. 13. p. 79. Vid. Const. Apost. l. 7. c. 42. p. 993.

swered, *I do believe.* This Form of *Interrogation* seems to have been very antient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he stiles Baptism *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, which can reasonably refer to nothing so well as that common Custom of *answering* in Baptism. These Answers and Actions in the *adult* were done by the Persons themselves, in *Children* by their *Sponsores*, as *Tertullian* calls them, their *Sureties* and Undertakers; for that both Infants and adult Persons had those that undertook for them at their Baptism, is so notoriously known, that it were impertinent to insist upon it. After this there was a kind of *Exorcism*, and and *Insufflation* or Breathing in the Face of the Person baptized (which St. *Augustine* calls a most antient *Tradition* of the Church) by which they signified the expelling of the Evil Spirit, and the breathing in the Good Spirit of God: Not that they thought that every one before Baptism was *possessed* by the Devil, but only that *we are by nature Children of Wrath*, Enemies to God, and Slaves to Satan. Nor did they lay any Stress upon the bare Usage of those Symbolick Rites, but wholly upon the Church's Prayers, which at the same time were made, that God would deliver those Persons from the power of Satan, and by his Spirit unite them to the Church. This being done, they were brought to the *Font*, and were first stript of their *Garments*, (intimating thereby *their putting off the Old Man, which is corrupt, with his deceitful Lusts:*) and that all occasions of Scandal and Immodesty might be prevented in so Sacred an Action, the * Men and Women (as I observed before) were baptized in their distinct *Apartments*; the Women having *Deaconesses* to attend them, to undress and dress them, to stand about and overshadow them, that nothing of Indecency might appear. Then followed the *Unction*, a Ceremony of early

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De Bap. c. 18. *p.* 231.

De nupt. & concup. l. 2. *c.* 29. *tom.* 7. *col.* 856.

* *Const. Apost. l.* 3. *c.* 15. *p.* 899. *Epiph. Hæres.* 79. *p.* 447. *ib. l.* 7. *c.* 23. *p.* 379. *Catec.* 2. *p.* 518. *Ambros. de Sacr. l.* 1. *c.* 2. *tom.* 4. *p.* 429. *Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c.* 2. *p.* 279.

Part I. date, by which (ſays St. *Cyril*) they ſignified that they were now cut off from the *wild Olive*, and were *ingrafted* into Chriſt the *true Olive-tree*, and made partakers of his Fruits and Benefits; or elſe to ſhew that now they were become *Champions* for Chriſt, and had entred upon a ſtate of Conflict, wherein they muſt ſtrive and contend with all the Snares and Allurements of the World; as the *Athletæ* of old were anointed againſt their ſolemn Games, that they might be more expedite, and that their *Antagoniſts* might take leſs hold upon them: or rather, probably to denote their being admitted to the great Privileges of Chriſtianity, *a choſen Generation*, *a Royal Prieſthood*, *an holy Nation* (as the *Apoſtle* ſtiles Chriſtians;) Offices, of which *anointing* was an antient Symbol, both of being deſigned to them, and inveſted in them. And this account † *Tertullian* favours, where, ſpeaking of this Unction in Baptiſm, he tells us, 'tis derived from the Antient, *i. e. Jewiſh* Diſcipline, where the Prieſts were wont to be *anointed* for the Prieſthood. For ſome ſuch purpoſe, they thought it fit that a Chriſtian (who carries *Unction* in his very *Name*) ſhould be anointed as a *ſpiritual* King and Prieſt, and that no time was more proper for it than at his Baptiſm, when the Name of *Chriſtian* was conferred upon him. *Together with this, we may ſuppoſe, it was that the *ſign* of the *Croſs* was made upon the Forehead of the Party baptized. When this Ceremony firſt began to be uſed in Baptiſm, I find not: St. *Baſil* reckons it (and he puts it too in the firſt place) amongſt thoſe antient *Cuſtoms* of the Church that had been derived from the Times of the *Apoſtles*. That it was generally in uſe in the Times of *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, we have ſufficient Evidence from their Writings, and indeed cannot reaſonaby ſuppoſe they ſhould omit it in this ſolemn Action (where it is ſo proper) when they uſed it

† *De Bap. c. 7. p. 226.*

**De Spir. S. c. 27. tom. 2. p. 351. Vid. Tert. adv. Marcion. l. 3. p. 226. Cyp. de lap. p. 169. Frons cum ſigno, &c. Deunit. Eccl. p. 185. Ea parte corporis, &c. adv. Demet. p. 203. renati, & ſigno Chriſti ſignati, &c. De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. Vid Cyril. ad. Illum. Catech. 4. p. 81.*

it in the commoneſt Actions of their Lives; *Tertullian* expreſly aſſuring us, *That upon every Motion, at their going out or coming in, at their going to Bath, or to Bed, or to Meals, or whatever their Imployment or Occaſions called them to, they were wont* frontem ſignaculo terere, *to make the ſign of the Croſs upon their Forehead*: and this they did (as he there tells us) not that it was impoſed upon them by any Law of *Chriſt*, but brought in by a pious Cuſtom, as that which did very much tend to ſtrengthen and increaſe their Faith. By this they ſhewed, *That they were not aſhamed of the Croſs of Chriſt*, nor unwilling to engage in the Service of a *crucified* Maſter, which yet was ſo great a Scandal to the Heathen World, and therefore they ſo often triumphed in this Symbol and Repreſentation of it. Thus St. *Hierom*, though he lived in a time when Chriſtianity had almoſt quite prevailed over all other Religions in the World, yet counted this the great matter of his Glory, *That I am* (ſays he) *a Chriſtian, that I was born of Chriſtian Parents, and do carry in my Forehead the Banner of the Croſs.* And indeed ſo great a reſpect did they bear to this Repreſentation of our *Saviour's* Death, that (though they did not *worſhip* the Croſs, yet) they took care that it ſhould not be put to any mean and trivial uſes, be painted or made upon the *Ground*, or engraven upon Marble *Pavements*, or any thing where it might be trampled upon; as is expreſly provided by a Law of *Theodoſius* and *Valentinian*.

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Præf. in Joh. tom. 3. p. 24.

Lib. 1. *C. Juſtin. tit.* 8. *L. unic.*

The Action having proceeded thus far, the Party to be baptized was wholly *immerged* or put under water, which was the almoſt conſtant and univerſal Cuſtom of thoſe times, whereby they did more notably and ſignificantly expreſs the *three great ends and effects* of Baptiſm: for as in Immerſion there are in a manner, three ſeveral Acts, the *putting* the Perſon into water, his *abiding* there for a little time,

Part. I. and his *riſing* up again; ſo by theſe were repreſented Chriſt's *Death*, *Burial*, and *Reſurrection*, and in conformity thereunto, our *Dying* unto Sin, the *Deſtruction* of its power, and our *Reſurrection* to a new courſe of Life: By the Perſon's being put into water was lively repreſented the putting off the body of the Sins of the Fleſh, and being waſhed from the Filth and Pollution of them; by his abode under it, which was a kind of Burial in the Water, his entring into a ſtate of Death or Mortification, like as *Chriſt* remained for ſome time under the State or Power of Death; therefore *as many as are baptized into Chriſt*, are ſaid *to be baptized into his death, and to be buried with him by Baptiſm into death, that the Old Man being crucified with him, the body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth he might not ſerve Sin, for that he that is dead is freed from Sin*, as the Apoſtle clearly explains the meaning of this Rite: And then by his *Emerſion*, or riſing up out of the Water, was ſignified his entring upon a new courſe of Life, differing from that which he lived before, *that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.* But though, by reaſon of the more eminent Significancy of theſe things, *Immerſion* was the common practice in thoſe days, and therefore they earneſtly urged it, and pleaded for it; yet did they not hold *Sprinkling* to be unlawful, eſpecially in caſes of neceſſity, as of Weakneſs, danger of Death, or where Conveniency of immerging could not be had: in theſe and ſuch like caſes *Cyprian* does not only allow, but plead for it, and that in a diſcourſe on purpoſe, when the queſtion concerning it was put to him. Upon this account it is, that Immerſion is now generally diſuſed in theſe parts of the World, and Sprinkling ſucceeded in its room, becauſe the tender Bodies of moſt Infants (the only Perſons now baptized) could not be put

Ep. 76. ad Magn. p. 153.

put under water in these cold *Northern* Climates, without apparent prejudice to their Health, if not their Lives: and therefore in this, as in other cases, *God requires Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, especially considering that the main Ends of Baptism are attained this way, and the mystical Effects of it as *truly*, though not so *plainly* and significantly, represented by Sprinkling, as by putting the Body under water. Chap. 10

This Immersion was performed *thrice*, the Person baptized being three several times put under water; a custom which *Basil* and *Sozomen* will have derived from the Apostles: 'tis certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by *Tertullian* as the common Practice. By this trine Immersion they signified (say some) their distinct adoring the three Persons in the *blessed Trinity*; and therefore the custom was, in repeating the words of Institution, at the naming of every *Person*, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, to plunge the Party under water, as *Tertullian* tells us, and St. *Ambrose* more expressly. 'Twas done (say others) to represent the *Death*, *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of our Saviour, together with his *three Days* continuance in the *Grave*. St. *Augustine* joins both these together, as the double Mystery of this antient Rite, as he is cited by *Gratian* to this purpose. It cannot be denied but that the Ceremony is very significant and expressive, and accordingly the Antients laid great weight upon it; insomuch that the *Canons* that go under the name of *Apostolical*, command him, whether Bishop or Presbyter, that baptizes any without the *trine Immersion*, to be *deposed* from his Ministry. But though this custom was in a manner universal, yet in some places (in after-times especially) it was otherwise; particularly in *Spain*, where they used it but *once*, lest they should gratify the *Arians*, who made use of the trine Immersion to denote the Per-

Ubi supra. *Hist. Eccl. lib. 6. c 26. p. 673. Adv. Prax. c. 26. p. 443. de Cor. mil. c. 3. p. 460. Dion Areop. Eccles. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 254. Ibid. de Sacram. lib. 2. c. 7. p. 424. Athanas. in dict. & interp. Jap. Quest. 93. Cyril. Catech. Myst. 2. p. 518. Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catech. c. 35. tom. 2. p. 530. De consecrat. Distinct. 4. c. 78. Can. 50.*

Part I. sons in the Trinity to be three distinct *Substances*, and gloried that the *Catholicks* did, and held the same with them. Upon this account they were content to immerge but once; and when Differences and Controversies did still remain about it, the fourth Council of *Toledo*, out of a Letter of *Gregory* the *great*, thus determined the case; That they should still use their single Immersion, and that this would sufficiently express the Mysteries of Baptism: the diving under water would denote Christ's *Death* and *descending* into Hell, the coming out, *his Resurrection*; the single Immersion would express the *Unity* of the Godhead; while the *Trinity* of Persons would be sufficiently denoted by the Person's being baptized *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. The Person baptized being come out of the water, was *anointed* the second time, as St. *Cyril* tells us; and indeed whatever becomes of the Unction that was before, 'tis certain that that which *Tertullian* speaks of as a part of the antient Discipline, was after the Person was baptized; which being done, he had a *white Garment* put upon him, to denote his having put off the *Lusts* of the Flesh, his being *washed* from the Filth and Defilement of his former Sins, and his Resolution to maintain a Life of unspotted Innocence and Purity, according to that solemn and strict Engagement which in Baptism he had taken upon him. In this they alluded to that of the Apostle, *that as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*, *i. e.* have engaged in that strict and holy Course of Life, which he, both by his Doctrine and Example, has left to the World. Accordingly Persons baptized are both by the Apostle, and by the Greek Fathers frequently called φωτιζόμενοι, or the *enlightned*, because they now professed that they were *become the children of the light and of the day*, and would not return to *works of darkness* any more; and this,

Can. 5.

De Baptism. c. 7. p. 226.

Cyril. Catech. 4. p. 533.

Jobius apud Phot. Cod. 222. c. 18. col. 597.

Ambros. de iis qui myster. initiant. c. 7. tom. 4. p. 425.

this, as they expected Mercy from *Christ* at the great Day: therefore the white Garment was wont to be delivered to them with such a charge as this, *Receive the white and immaculate Garment, and bring it forth without spot before the Tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou may'st have Eternal Life. Amen.* From the wearing of these white Vestments (as we have observed before) *Pentecost*, (which was one of the two annual times for Baptism) came to be called *Whitesunday*; as also the Sunday after *Easter*, (which was the other time) *Dominica in albis*, because then they laid this *white* Robe aside: for it was the Custom for Persons baptized to wear this Garment for a whole week after they were baptized, and then to put it off and lay it up in the Church, that it might be kept as an Evidence against them, if they violated or denied that *Faith* which they had owned in Baptism; whereof we have a memorable Instance under the *Arian* Persecution in *Africk*. *Elpidophorus*, a Citizen of *Carthage*, had lived a long time in the Communion of the Church, but apostatizing afterwards to the *Arians*, became a most bitter and implacable Persecutor of the *Orthodox* Party: Amongst others whom he summoned to be put to the Rack, was one *Miritas*, a venerable old *Deacon* (who had been the *Undertaker* for him at his Baptism) who being ready to be put upon the Rack, plucked out the white Vestment wherewith *Elpidophorus* had been clothed at his Baptism, and with Tears in his Eyes thus openly bespake him before all the People: *These*, Elpidophorus, *thou Minister of Error, these are the Garments that shall accuse thee, when thou shalt appear before the Majesty of the great Judg; these I will diligently keep as a Testimony of that Ruin that shall depress thee down into the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone; these are they that were girt upon thee, when thou camest pure out of the Holy Font; and these*

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Gregor. Sacramentar. inter Liturgic. Latinor. tom. 2. p. 269. vid. Eucholog. Græc. in Offic. S. Baptism. p. 357.

Victor Utic. de persecut. Vand. lib. 3. fol. 43.

Part I. *are they that ſhall bitterly purſue thee when thou ſhalt be caſt into the place of Flames; becauſe thou haſt clothed thy ſelf with curſing as with a garment, and haſt caſt off the ſacred Obligation of thy Baptiſm, and the true Faith which thou did'ſt then profeſs and take upon thee.* Theſe were the main and moſt conſiderable Circumſtances wherewith *Baptiſm* was adminiſtred in the primitive Church; ſome whereof were by degrees antiquated and diſuſed: other Rites there were that belonged only to particular Churches, and which, as they were ſuddenly taken up, ſo were as quickly laid aſide; others were added in after-times, till they increaſed ſo faſt, that the Uſage and the Number of them became abſurd and burdenſom, as may appear by the Office for Baptiſm in the *Romiſh Ritual* at this day.

As a Concluſion to this Chapter, I had once thought to have treated concerning *CONFIRMATION*, which ever was a conſtant *Appendage* to Baptiſm, and had noted ſome things to that purpoſe; but ſhall ſuperſede that labour, finding it ſo often, and ſo fully done by others in juſt Diſcourſes, that nothing conſiderable can be added to them; only I ſhall give this brief and general account of it: All Perſons baptized in the antient Church (according to their Age and Capacity, Perſons *adult*, ſome little time after Baptiſm; *Children*, when arrived to years of competent Ripeneſs and Maturity) were brought to the Biſhop, there further to *confirm* and ratify that *Compact* which they had made with God in Baptiſm, and by ſome ſolemn acts of his Miniſtry, to be themſelves *confirmed* and ſtrengthned, by having the *Grace* and Bleſſing of God conferred upon them, to enable them to diſcharge that great Promiſe and Engagement which they had made to God. This was uſually performed with the Ceremony of *Unction*, the Perſon confirmed being anointed by the Biſhop, or in his abſence by an inferior Miniſter; and indeed Unction

Bp Taylor, *Dr.* Hammond, *Mr.* Baxter, *Mr.* Hanmer, *Mr.* Daille.

tion was an antient Rite used in the *Jewish* Church, to denote the conferring of Gifts or Graces upon Persons, and thence probably, amongst other reasons (as many other Usages were) might be derived into the *Christian* Church; though a *learned* Man is of Opinion, that *Unction* was never used in *Confirmation*, but where the Person being in Case of Necessity baptized by some of the inferior Clergy, had not been before anointed: otherwise those who had received compleat Baptism, were not afterwards anointed at their Confirmation, for which the Council of *Orange* is most expres and clear. And indeed that Confirmation was often administred without this *Unction*, no Man can doubt that knows the State of those times; being done only by solemn *Imposition* of the Bishop's Hands, and by devout and pious Prayers, that the Persons confirmed might *grow in Grace and the Knowledg of Christ*, and be enabled to perform those Vows and Purposes, and that Profession of Faith which they had before embraced in Baptism, and then again owned before the whole Congregation. Till this was done, they were not accounted *compleat Christians*, nor admitted to the holy *Communion*, nor could challenge any actual Right to those great Privileges of *Christianity*. Whence it is that the Antients so often speak of Confirmation, as that which did *perfect* and consummate *Christians*, as being a means to confer greater measures of that Grace that was but begun in Baptism: upon all which accounts, and almost exactly according to the *Primitive* Usage, it is still retained and practised in our own *Church* at this Day. And happy were it for us, were it kept up in its due Power and Vigour; sure I am, 'tis too plain that many of our unhappy Breaches and Controversies in Religion, do (if not wholly, in a great measure) owe their birth and rise to the Neglect and Contempt of this excellent Usage of the Church.

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Hen. Vales. Annot. ad Euseb. Hist. Eccles. p. 135. col. 1.

Can. 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Lord's Supper, and the Administration of it in the antient Church.

The Perſons diſpenſing this Ordinance, who. The Perſons communicating, the Baptized or the Faithful. Suſpenſion from this Ordinance according to the nature of the Offence. The Euchariſt ſent home to them that could not be preſent. The Caſe of Serapion. *A Cuſtom in ſome Places to give the Sacrament to Perſons when dead, if they died before they could receive it, and why. The Euchariſt kept by Perſons at home. Sent abroad. This laid aſide, and in its ſtead* Eulogiæ, *or pieces of conſecrated Bread ſent from one Church to another, as Tokens of Communion. The time of its Adminiſtration: ſometimes in the Morning, ſometimes at Night: varied according to the Peace they enjoyed. How oft they received the Euchariſt. At firſt every Day. This continued, in* Cyprian's *time, four times a Week. Afterwards leſs frequented. The uſual Places of receiving, the Church: ordinarily, not lawful to conſecrate it elſewhere. Oblations made by Perſons before their Communicating. Their* Agapæ, *or Love-feaſts, what. Whether before, or after the Sacrament. How long continued in the Church. The manner of celebrating this Sacrament, collected out of the moſt antient Authors. The Holy Kiſs. The*

general

general Prayer for the Church and the whole World. The Conſecration of the Sacrament: The Form of it out of St. Ambroſe. *The Bread, common Bread. The ſacramental Wine mixed with Water. This no neceſſary part of the Inſtitution. Why probably uſed in thoſe Countries. The poſture of receiving not always the ſame. Singing Pſalms during the time of the celebration. Followed with Prayer and Thankſgiving. The whole Action concluded with the Kiſs of Peace.* Chap. 11

THE holy *Euchariſt* or *SUPPER* of our *LORD*, being a Rite ſo ſolemnly inſtituted, and of ſuch great Importance in the *Chriſtian* Religion, had place accordingly amongſt the Antients in their *publick* Offices and Devotions. In ſpeaking to which, I ſhall much-what obſerve the ſame Method I did in treating concerning *Baptiſm*, conſidering the *Perſons*, the *Time*, the *Place*, and the *Manner* of its Celebration. The *Perſons* adminiſtring were the ordinary *Paſtors* and Governors of the Church, thoſe who were ſet apart for the Miniſtration of Holy Offices; the Inſtitution was begun by our *Lord* himſelf, and the Adminiſtration of it by him committed to his *Apoſtles*, and to their ordinary Succeſſors to the end of the World. We find in *Tertullian*, that they never received it from any but the hand of the *Preſident*, which muſt either be meant of the particular Cuſtom of that Church where he lived, or of *Conſecration* only; for otherwiſe the Cuſtom was, when the *Biſhop* or *Preſident* had by ſolemn Prayers and Bleſſings conſecrated the Sacramental Elements, for the *Deacons* to diſtribute them to the People, as well to thoſe that were abſent, *De Cor. mil. c. 3. p.* 102.

as

Part I.

as to them that were present, as *Justin Martyr* expressly affirms, and as the Custom generally was afterwards. For the *Persons communicating* at this Sacrament, at first the *whole* Church, or Body of *Christians*, within such a space, that had embraced the Doctrine of the Gospel, and been baptized into the Faith of *Christ*, used constantly to meet together at the *Lord*'s Table. As Christians multiplied, and a more exact Discipline became necessary, none were admitted to this Ordinance till they had arrived at the degree of the *Faithful*; for whoever were in the State of *Catechumens*, *i. e.* under Instruction in order to their Baptism, or by reason of any heinous Crime, under the *Censures* and Suspension of the Church, and not yet passed through the several Stages of the *Penitents*; might not communicate, and were therefore commanded to *depart* the Church, when the rest went to the Celebration of the Sacrament: For looking upon the *Lord's Supper* as the highest and most solemn Act of Religion, they thought they could never take care enough in the dispensing of it. Accordingly, whoever were found guilty of any scandalous Fault, was, according to the nature of the Offence, debarred the Communion, a shorter or a longer time, and sometimes all their Life, not to be reconciled and taken into the Communion of the Church, till they had continued their Repentance to their Death-bed. As for those Persons that could not be present, either through distance of Place, Sickness, or any other just Cause, the *Eucharist* was wont to be sent *home* to them, some little pieces of the *consecrated* Bread *dipt* in the Sacramental *Cup*, which were usually carried by the *Deacon* or some inferior Officer of the Church, or in Cases of Necessity, by any other Person: As in the Case of *Serapion*, of whom *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* relates, That having been all his Life a good Man, at last *lapsed* in a time of Persecution,

Apol. 2. *p.* 97.

Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 6. *c.* 44. *p.* 246.

secution, and though he oft desired Reconciliation, yet none would communicate with him. Not long after, he was seized upon by a mortal Sickness, depriv'd of the use of his Speech and Senses; but coming to himself after four Days, he sends his Nephew, a little Boy, late at Night, for one of the *Presbyters* to come to him; the Minister was at that time sick, but considering the exigence of the Case, gives the Boy a little piece of the *Eucharist*, bids him to *moisten* it with a little Water, and so give it him in his Mouth, which he did; and immediately the old Man chearfully departed this Life. For the better understanding of which, we are to observe, that those who had lapsed into Idolatry were to undergo a very long time of Penance, and were not many times admitted to the Communion, till they were near their Death: and because it sometimes happen'd that they were overtaken with sudden Death, before the Sacrament could be administred to them, thence a Custom sprung up, to give it them *after* they were *dead*; which they did doubtless upon this ground, that they might give some kind of Evidence, that those Persons died in the *Peace* and *Communion* of the Church: though this Usage was afterwards by many *Councils* abrogated and laid aside. I take no notice in this place of their giving the Eucharist to *new baptized Infants*, the Case being so commonly known and obvious. In those early times, nothing was more common than for Christians either to carry, or to have sent to them some parts of the *Eucharist*, which they kept in some decent place in their Houses against all emergent Occasions; especially to *fortify* and strengthen their Faith in times of Persecution, and to increase Kindness and Amity with one another: whence one that was well versed in *Church-Antiquities*, conjectures, that whenever they entertained Friends or Strangers, they used before every Meal, first

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Vid. Conc. 3. Carth. Can. 6. Conc. 6. in Trull. Can. 83.

Joa. Front. Epist. de φιλοξενίαις Veter. p. 6.

Part I. first to give them some parts of the Holy *Eucharist*, as being the greatest *Badg*, the strongest *Band* of true Love and Friendship in the World. Besides these parcels of the Sacramental Elements, there were wont at the Celebration of the Communion, to be pieces of Bread (which remained of the Offerings of the People) which being solemnly *blessed* by the Bishop, might be given to those who had no right to be at the *Lord*'s Table, as to the *Catechumens*, and such like, and were to them instead of the Sacrament. These pieces were properly called *Eulogiæ*, because set apart by solemn *Benediction*, and were sent up and down the Towns and Villages round about, to testify and represent their mutual Union and Fellowship with one another; nay, and sometimes from Churches in one Country to those that were in another; which was also done by the *Eucharist* it self: For so *Irenæus* in a Letter to Pope *Victor*, tells us, that the Ministers of Churches (though differing in some little Circumstances) did yet use to send the *Eucharist* to one another; which Custom is also taken notice of by *Zonaras*. But because the carrying the *Sacramental Elements* up and down the World, was thought not so well to consist with the Reverence and Veneration that is due to this solemn Ordinance; therefore it was abolished by the *Laodicean* Synod, and these *Eulogiæ* or pieces of Bread appointed at *Easter* to be sent up and down in their room.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 23. p. 193.

Can. 14.

For the *Time*, the next Circumstance, when they met together for this solemn Action, it was in general at their Publick Assemblies, on the *Lord's-Day* always, or the first Day of the Week, as we find it in the History of the *Apostles Acts*; besides other Days, and especially *Saturday*; on which Day all the Churches in the World (those of *Rome* only and *Alexandria* excepted) used to celebrate this Sacrament,

as

as the *Historian* informs us. What time of the Day they took to do it, is not altogether so certain. Our blessed *Saviour* and his Apostles celebrated at Night, at the time of the *Jewish* Passover; but whether the *Apostles* and their immediate Successors punctually observed this Circumstance, may be doubted; 'tis probable that the Holy *Eucharist*, which St. *Paul* speaks of in the Church of *Corinth*, was solemnized in the *Morning*; the Apostles calling it a *Supper*, (as *Chrysostom* thinks) not because it was done in the *Evening*, but the more effectually to put them in mind of the time when our *Lord* did institute those Holy Mysteries. *Tertullian* assures us, in his time 'twas done *in tempore victûs*, about *Supper-time*, (as all understand him) and very often in the Morning *before Day*, when they held their Religious Assemblies; of which *Pliny* also takes notice in his Letter to the *Emperor*. For in those times of Persecution, when they were hunted out by the inquisitive Malice of their Enemies, they were glad of the remotest Corners, the most unseasonable Hours, when they could meet to perform the joint Offices of Religion. But this communicating at Evening or at Night, either lasted only during the extreme Heats of Persecution, or at least wore off apace; for *Cyprian* expresly pleads against it, affirming, that it ought to be in the *Morning*: and so indeed in a short time it prevailed over most parts of the World, except in some places of *Egypt* near *Alexandria*; of which *Socrates* tells us, that after they had sufficiently feasted themselves in the Evening, they were wont to receive the Sacrament. Under this Circumstance of time we may take occasion to consider, how oft in those days, they usually met at this Table. And at first (while the *Spirit* of Christianity was yet warm and vigorous, and the Hearts of Men passionately inflamed with the Love of *Christ*) 'tis more than

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Socr. l. 4. c. 22. p. 286.

In loc.

De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102.

Lib. 10. ep. 97.

Ad Cæcil. ep. 63. p. 104.

Ut supra, p. 287.

Part I.

than probable they communicated *every Day*; or as oft as they came together for Publick Worship, insomuch that the *Canons Apostolical* and the Synod of *Antioch*, threaten every one of the Faithful with Excommunication, who came to Church to hear the Holy Scriptures, but staid not to *participate* of the *Lord's Supper*. The Eye of their Minds was then almost wholly fixed upon the Memory of their *crucified Saviour*; and the oftner they fed at his Table, the stronger and healthier they found themselves, and the more able to encounter with those fierce Oppositions that were made against them. This Custom of receiving the Sacrament *every Day* continued some considerable time in the Church, though in some places longer than in others, especially in the *Western* Churches. From *Cyprian* we are fully assured 'twas so in his time: *We receive the Eucharist every day* (says he) *as the Food that nourishes us to Salvation.* The like St. *Ambrose* seems to intimate, of *Milan*, whereof he was Bishop; nay, and after him St. *Hierom* tells us, 'twas the Custom of the Church of *Rome*; and St. *Augustine* seems pretty clearly to intimate, that it was not unusual in his time. In the Churches of the *East* this Custom wore off sooner, though more or less, according as the Primitive Zeal did abate and decay; St. *Basil* telling us, that in his time they communicated *four times a Week*, on the *Lord's Day*, *Wednesday*, *Friday*, and *Saturday*; yea, and upon other days too, if the *Memory* or Festival of any Martyr fell upon them. Afterwards, as the Power of Religion began more sensibly to decline, and the commonness of the thing begat some Contempt, (*Manna* it self was *slighted* after once it was rained down every day) this Sacrament was more rarely frequented; and from once a Day it came to once or twice a *Week*, and then fell to once a *Month*, and after for the most part to *thrice a Year*, at the *three* great Solemnities

Can. 9. Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.

Vid. ep. Cyp. ad Thaboit. ep. 56. circa init. p. 89.

De Orat. Dom. p. 192.

De Sacr. l. 5. c. 4. p. 449. tom. 4.

Ad Jovinian. p. 108. tom. 2.

De Serm. Dom. in mont. l. 2. tom. 4. col. 1147. & ep. 118. ad Januar. c. 3. col. 557.

Basil. ep. 289. ad Cæsariam. Patrit. tom. 3. p. 279.

lemnities of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Whitsuntide*. To so great a coldness and indifferency did the Piety and Devotion of *Christians* grow, after once the true Primitive Temper and Spirit of the Gospel had left the World!

Concerning the third Circumstance, the *Place* where this Holy Supper was kept, much need not be said, it being a main part of their publick Worship, always performed in the place of their Religious Assemblies. 'Twas instituted by our *Saviour* in a private *House*, because of its *Analogy* to the *Jewish Passover*, and because the Necessity of that time would not otherwise admit. By the Apostles and Christians with them, 'twas celebrated in the Houses of Believers, generally in an *upper Room*, set apart by the Bounty of some Christian, for the Uses of the Church; and which (as I have formerly proved) was the constant *separate* Place of Religious Worship for all the Christians that dwelt thereabouts. Under the Severities of great Persecutions they were forced to fly to the *Mountains*, or to their *Cryptæ*, or Vaults under Ground, and to celebrate the Sacrament at the *Tombs* of Martyrs, and over the *Ashes* of the Dead. Churches growing up into some Beauty and Regularity, several parts of the Divine Office began to have several Places assigned to them; the Communion Service being removed to the upper or *East* end of the Church, and there performed upon a Table of Wood, which afterwards was changed into one of Stone; and both of them not uncommonly, though *metaphorically*, by the Fathers stiled *Altars*: and the *Eucharist* it self, in later Times especially, the *Sacrament of the Altar*. This place was called, Θυσιαστηριον, and was fenced in with *Rails*, within which the *Clergy* received the Sacrament, as the *Laity* did without. Here it was that they all used to meet at this heavenly Banquet; for out of this place they

Part I. allowed not the Celebration of the Sacrament, (a thing expresly forbidden by the *Laodicean* Council) unless in Cases of great Necessity; and therefore 'twas one of the principal Articles for which the Synod of *Gangra* deposed *Eustathius* from his Bishoprick, that he kept *private Meetings*, persuading some that were averse to the *publick Assemblies* of the Church, that they might communicate and receive the Sacrament at *Home*.

Can. 58.

Socrat. l. 2. *c.* 43. *p.* 156. *&* *Conc. Gangr. Can.* 5, 6.

We come last of all to consider the *Manner* how the *Eucharist* was celebrated in the antient Church; but before we describe that, we are to take notice, that after the Service of the *Catechumens*, and before the beginning of that of the *Faithful*, at which the *Eucharist* was administred, the Custom was to present their *Offerings*; every one, according to his Ability, bringing some Gift as the *first Fruits* of his Increase, which was by the Minister laid upon the *Altar* or Communion-Table, none of them then thinking it fit *to appear before the Lord empty*. And therefore St. *Cyprian* severely chides a rich Widow of his time, who came without giving any thing to the *Poor Man's Box*, and did partake of their *Offerings* without bringing any *Offering* of her own. These *Oblations* were designed to the Uses of the Church, for the Maintenance of the Ministry, and the Relief of the Poor; especially out of them were taken the *Bread* and the *Wine* for the Sacramental Elements, the Bread being no other than *common* Bread, such as served for their ordinary Uses; there being then no notice taken of what has for so many hundred Years, and still is to this Day fiercely disputed between the *Greek* and the *Latin* Church, whether it ought to be Leavened or Unleavened Bread. Out of these Oblations also 'tis probable they took (at least sent Provisions extraordinary) to furnish the *common Feast*, which in those Days they constantly had at the Celebration

Irenæus adv. Hær. l. 4. *c.* 34. *p.* 362.

Just. Mart. Ap. 2. *p.* 98.

De Oper. & Eleemos. p. 218.

bration of the Sacrament, where the Rich and the Poor feasted together at the same Table. These were called *Agapæ* or *Love-Feasts*, (mentioned by St. *Jude*, and plainly enough intimated by St. *Paul*) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual *Love* and Kindness, a thing never more proper than at the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; which is not only a *Seal* of our *Peace* with God, but a *Sign* and a Pledge of our Communion and Fellowship with one another. Whether this Banquet was *before* or *after* the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, is not easy to determine; 'tis probable, that in the *Apostles* time, and the Age after them, it was *before* it, in imitation of our *Saviour*'s Institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after Supper: And St. *Paul* taxing the Abuses of the Church of *Corinth*, reproves them, *That when they came together for the Lord's Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own Supper, i. e.* that Provision which he had brought from Home for the common Feast; which was devoured with great Irregularity and Excess; some eating and drinking all they brought, others (the Poor especially that came late) having nothing left, one being hungry, and another drunken. All this, 'tis plain, was done before the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, which was never administred till the whole Church met together. That therefore which the *Apostle* reproves and corrects, is their Indecency and Intemperance, commanding both Rich and Poor to *wait for one another*, and to eat this common Meal together, that they might the more orderly and unanimously pass to the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. In after-ages this Feast was not till the Communion was over, when the Congregation feasted together, and so departed: and so *Chrysostom* expressly tells us 'twas in his Days. Besides, nothing is more obvious, than that it was customary in those

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1 Cor. 11.

Hom. 27. in 1 ad Cor. p. 559.

Part I. times for Perſons to *faſt* till they had received the Communion. I knew a very learned Man is of Opinion, that theſe *Love-Feaſts* were not kept at the ſame time with the Celebration of the *Euchariſt*; but beſides that his Arguments are not concluſive, the whole ſtream of learned Writers runs full againſt him. Theſe Feaſts continued for ſome Ages, till great Inconveniences being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in Churches by the *Laodicean* Synod, and after that by the Council of *Carthage*; which though but Provincial or National Councils, yet the Decrees were afterwards ratified by the ſixth *Trullan* Council, and the Cuſtom in a ſhort time dwindled into nothing.

Albaſ. de Rit. Eccl. obſ. 18. *p.* 135.

Can. 28.

Can. 74.

Theſe things being premiſed, the Sacramental Elements prepared, and all things ready, they proceeded to the Action it ſelf, which (following for the main, the account that is given us by St. *Cyril* of *Jeruſalem*, and taking in what we find in others) was uſually managed after this manner: Firſt, The *Deacon* brought Water to the *Biſhop* and the *Presbyters* that ſtood round about the Table, to waſh their Hands; ſignifying the *Purity* that ought to be in thoſe that draw nigh to God, according to that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *I will waſh my hands in Innocency, and ſo will I compaſs thine Altar, O Lord.* Then the *Deacon* cried out aloud, *Mutually embrace and kiſs one another.* This *holy Kiſs* was very antient, commonly uſed in the Apoſtles times, and in the ſucceeding Ages of the Church; but eſpecially at the Sacrament, as a ſign of the unfeigned *Reconciliation* of their Minds, and that all Injuries and Offences were blotted out, according to our *Lord*'s Command; *When thou bringeſt thy Gift to the Altar, and remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, leave thy Gift before the Altar and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* This being

Catech. myſt. 5. *Cyril. ib. p.* 534.

Conſt. Apoſ. l. 8. *c.* 11. *p.* 1013.

Juſt. Mart. Ap. 2. *p.* 97.

being done, they fell to Prayer, the whole Congregation praying together with the Minister, (which therefore *Justin Martyr* calls the *Common-Prayer*, the Form whereof in the *Apostolical Constitutions* is described at large) for the *universal Peace* and Welfare of the Church, for the *Tranquillity* and Quietness of the World, for the *Prosperity* of the Age, for *wholesome Weather* and *fruitful Seasons*, for all sorts of *Persons*, for *Kings* and *Emperors*, *and all in Authority*, for *Soldiers*, and *Armies*, for *Believers and Unbelievers*, for *Friends* and *Companions*, for the *Sick* and *Distressed*; and in short, for all that stood in need of help. This general Prayer is frequently mentioned by the antient Fathers, as that which was at the beginning of the Commuion Service; tho St. *Cyril* places it a little later, as doubtless it was in his time. After this, followed the mutual Salutation of the Minister and People, the *Minister* saying, *The Lord be with you*; to whom the *People* answered, *And with thy Spirit.* The Minister cryed, *Lift up your Hearts*, (nothing being more suitable, says St. *Cyril*, at this time, than that we should shake off all worldly Cares, and exalt our Hearts to God in Heaven) the People truly assenting and yielding to it, answered, *We lift them up unto the Lord.* The Minister proceeded, *Let us give Thanks unto the Lord*, (for what more fit than thankfulness to God, and a high resentment of such Favours and Blessings?) to this the People returned, *It is meet and just so to do.* Whereupon the Minister proceeded to the Prayer of Consecration, (the Form whereof we have in the *Apostolical* Constitutions) wherein he expressed huge thankfulness to God for the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of his Son, for the shedding of his Blood for us, and the Celebration of it in this Sacrament; for condescending to admit them to such mighty Benefits, and praying for a closer Unity to

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Ibid. *lib.* 8. *c.* 10. *p.* 1011.

Tert. Apol. *c.* 39.

Aug. ep. 118.

Const. Apos. *l.* 2. *c.* 57. *p.* 881.

Ib. p. 538.

Cyril. p. 537.

Chrys. in. *c.* 9. 1 *ad Cor. Hom.* 36. *p.* 652. 2 *ad Cor.* *c.* 8. *Hom.* 18. *p.* 873.

Cypr. de Or. dom. 195.

Lib. 7. *c.* 26. *p.* 979.

Just. Mart. *ib. p.* 98.

Part I. one another in the same mystical Body; concluding usually with the *Lord's-Prayer*, and the hearty and universal Acclamation of *Amen* by all that were present. This done, the *Minister* cried out, ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΙΣ, *Holy things belong to holy Persons:* the *People* answering, *There is one Holy, one Lord Jesus Christ.* Then he exhorted them to a due participation of the holy Mysteries, which *Cyril* tells us was done by way of a Divine *Hymn*, singing, *Come taste and see that the Lord is good.*

Cyril. p. 541. *Const. Apos. l.* 8. *c.* 13. *p.* 1022. *Ib. p.* 545.

After this, the *Bishop* or *Presbyter* took the Sacramental Elements, sanctified them by a solemn Benediction. The Form of *Consecration* we have in St. *Ambrose: Lord, make this Oblation now prepared for us, to become a reasonable and acceptable Sacrifice; this, which is the Figure of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; who the Day before he suffered, took the Bread in his sacred Hands, looked up to Heaven, giving thanks to thee, O Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, blessed it, and having broken it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take, eat all of it; for this is my Body which is broken for many. Likewise also, after Supper, he took the Cup that very Day before he suffered, looking up to Heaven, giving Thanks to thee, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God; and having blessed it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take and drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood.* After this, he first brake the *Bread*, and delivering it to the Deacon, he distributed it to the Communicants; and after that the *Cup*, which was likewise delivered to them: for the Custom of communicating under *one kind* only, as is used in the Church of *Rome*, was then unknown unto the World, nay, and for above thousand Years after *Christ*. In some cases ('tis true) they dipt the Bread in the Wine, as in the Case of baptized *Infants*, to whom they administred the *Eucharist*, in those

De Sacr. l. 4. *c.* 5. *p.* 439.

Just. Mart. ubi supr.

those Primitive Times, and to very weak dying Persons who would not otherwise have swallowed the Bread; and that by this means they might keep the Sacrament at home against all emergent Occasions: and this probably might, in time, make the way easier for introducing the Sacrament under the kind of Bread only. Their Sacramental Wine was generally diluted and mixed with *Water*, as is evident from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian* and others. *Cyprian* in a long Epistle expresly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tradition, derived from *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and endeavours to find out many *mystical* significations intended by it, and seems to intimate as if he had been peculiarly *warned* of God to observe it according to that manner: an *Argument* which that good Man often produces as his Warrant to knock down a Controversy, when other Arguments were too weak to do it. But although it should be granted, that our *Saviour* did so use it in the Institution of the Supper, (the Wines of those *Eastern* Countries being very *strong* and *generous*; and that our *Saviour*, as all sober and temperate Persons, might probably abate its strength with Water, of which nevertheless the History of the Gospel is wholly silent) yet this being a thing in it self *indifferent* and accidental, and no way *necessary* to the Sacrament, could not be obligatory to the Church, but might either be done or let alone. The Posture wherein they received it was not always the same: The *Apostles*, at the Institution of it by our *Saviour*, received it (according to the Custom of the *Jews* at Meals, at that time) *lying along* on their sides upon Beds round about the Table. How long this way of receiving lasted, I find not: in the time of *Dionysius Alexandrinus* the Custom was, to stand at the *Lord's Table*, as he intimates in a Letter to Pope *Xystus*; other Gestures being taken in, as the Prudence and Piety

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Ut supra. *Iren. l. 4. c. 57. l. 5. c. 2.* *Ad. Cæcil. Ep. 63. p.* 100. *Ib. p.* 105. *Apud Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 9. p.* 255.

Part. I. of the Governors of the Church judged most decent and comely for such a solemn Action. The Bread and Wine were delivered into the Hands of those that communicated, and not, as the Superstition of after-ages brought in, *injected* or thrown into their *Mouths*. *Cyril* tells us, that in his time they used to stretch out their *right* Hand, putting their *left* Hand under it; either to prevent any of the Sacramental Bread from falling down, or, as some would have it, hereby to shadow out a kind of figure of a *Cross*.

Pag. 545. *Vid. Conc.* 6. *in Trull. Can.* 101.

During the time of Administration, which in populous Congregations was no little time, they sung *Hymns* and Psalms; (the Compiler of the *Apostolical Constitutions* particularly mentions the 33*d* Psalm) which being done, the whole Action was solemnly concluded with Prayer and Thanksgiving, (the Form whereof is likewise set down by the Author of the *Apostolical* Constitutions) that God had thought them worthy to participate of such sacred Mysteries: and the People being blessed by the Bishop or the Minister of the Assembly, and having again saluted each other with a *Kiss of Peace*, as a Testimony of their hearty Love and Kindness, (whence *Tertullian* calls this Kiss *signaculum orationis*, the *Seal of Prayer*) the Assembly broke up, and they returned to their own Houses. This, for the main, was the Order wherein the first *Christians* celebrated this Holy Sacrament; for though I do not pretend to set down every thing in that precise and punctual order wherein they were always done, (and how should I, when they often varied according to *Time* and *Place?*) yet I doubt not but whoever examines the Usages of those Times, will find that 'tis done as near as the nature of the thing would bear.

Lib. 8. *c.* 13. *p.* 1023.

Vide Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 3. *p.* 284. *l.* 7. *c.* 27. *p.* 980. *& l.* 8. *c.* 15. *Cyr. p.* 546. *De Orat. c.* 14.

The End of the First Part.

Primitive

Primitive Christianity:

OR THE

RELIGION

OF THE

Antient Christians,

IN THE

First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART II.

The Religion of the Primitive Christians, as to those Vertues that respect themselves.

CHAP. I.

Of their Humility.

The second Branch of Religion comprehended under the Notion of Sobriety, and discovered in some great instances of it. The proper Ten-

Tendency of the Christian Religion to beget Humility. This Divine Temper eminently visible in the first Christians: Made good out of their Writings. The great Humility and Self-Denial of Cyprian. *What* Nazianzen *reports to this purpose of his own Father; their modest declining that just Commendation that was due to them. Many who suffered, refused the honourable Title of Martyrs.* Nazianzen's *Vindication of them against the Suggestions of* Julian *the Apostate. The singular Meekness and Condescension of* Nebridius, *amidst all his Honours and Relations at Court. Their stooping to the vilest Offices, and for the meanest Persons: Dressing and Ministring to the Sick, washing the Saints Feet, kissing the Martyrs Chains. The remarkable Humility of* Placilla *the Empress, and the Lady* Paula. *An excellent Discourse of* Gregory Nyssen's *against Pride.*

NEXT to *Piety* towards God, succeeds that part of Religion that immediately respects *our selves*, expressed by the Apostle under the general Name of **Sobriety**, or the keeping our selves within those Bounds and Measures which God has set us; Vertues, for which the Primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other. Amongst them I take notice of their *Humility*, their *Contempt* of the *World*, their *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, their *Courage* and *Constancy*, and their exemplary *Patience* under Sufferings. To begin with the first.

Humility is a Vertue that seems more proper to the Gospel; for though *Philosophers*, now and then, spake a few good Words concerning it, yet it found no

no real entertainment in their Lives, being generally *animalia gloriæ*, Creatures puft up with wind and emptineſs, and that *ſacrific'd* only to their own praiſe and honour: Whereas the Doctrines of the *Goſpel* immediately tend to level all proud and ſwelling Apprehenſions, to plant the World with Mildneſs and Modeſty, and to *clothe Men with Humility, and the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit.* By theſe we are taught to dwell at home, and to converſe more familiarly with our ſelves, to be acquainted with our own Deficiencies and Imperfections, and rather to admire *others* than to advance *our ſelves:* For the proper Notion of Humility lies in a low and mean *Eſtimation* of our ſelves, and an anſwerable Carriage towards others; *not thinking of our ſelves more highly than we ought to think*, nor being unwilling that other Men ſhould value us at the ſame rate. Now that this was the excellent Spirit of *Primitive Chriſtianity* will appear, if we conſider how earneſtly they proteſted againſt all *ambitious* and vain-glorious Deſigns, how chearfully they condeſcended to the *meaneſt* Offices and Imployments, how ſtudiouſly they declined all Advantages of *Applauſe* and Credit, how ready they were rather to *give* Praiſe to others, than to take it to themſelves, in *Honour preferring one another.* St. *Clemens* highly commends his *Corinthians*, that all of them were of an humble Temper, in nothing given to Vain-glory, *ſubject* unto others rather than *ſubjecting* others to themſelves, ready to give rather than receive. Accordingly, he exhorts them (eſpecially after they were fallen into a little Faction and Diſorder) ſtill to be humble-minded, to lay aſide all Haughtineſs and Pride, Fooliſhneſs and Anger; and not to glory in *Wiſdom, Strength,* or *Riches*, but *let him that glories glory in the Lord*; and to follow the Example of our Lord, the *Scepter* of the Majeſty of God; who came not in the vain boaſting of

Chap. 1.

Epiſt. ad Corinth. p. 3.

Pag. 17.

Pag. 20.

Part II. of Arrogancy and Pride, although able to do whatsoever he pleased; but in great Meekness and Humility of Mind, appearing in the World without any *Form or Comeliness, or any Beauty that he should be desired*; suffering himself *to be despised and rejected of Men, who esteemed him not, and hid, as it were, their Faces from him; who counted himself a Worm, and no Man, and was accordingly made a Reproach of Men, and the Derision of the People: all they that saw him, laughing him to scorn, shooting out the Lip, and shaking the Head at him.* Now if our Lord himself was so humble-minded, what should we be, who are come under the Yoke of his Grace? This, and much more to the same purpose, has that Venerable and *Apostolical* Man in that admirable Epistle; wherein he does lively describe and recommend the meek and excellent Spirit of the Gospel.

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 505. *Justin* the *Martyr* treads in the very same Steps: He tells us, that we are to shun all *sinister* Suspicions of others, and to be very careful what *Opinion* we entertain of them: That we are to be of a meek and unpassionate Mind, not *envying* the good Esteem and Respect which others have, nor ambitiously affecting, or putting our selves forwards upon any Service or Employment: That we are humbly to submit our selves, not in *Words* only, but in all our *Actions*; so as that we may appear not to be *Impostors* and Dissemblers, but mild and undesigning Persons: for whoever would govern his Life aright, must be modest and *unpragmatical*; not angry and contentious, but silently consider with himself, what is best and fittest to be done: That we are to account others wise and prudent, and not to think our selves the only discreet and understanding Persons: That we must not despise their Admonitions; but hearken to their Counsels whenever they are just and true. When some in St. *Cyprian*'s time had made a noble and re-

Ibid. p. 508, 509.

solute

solute Confession of *Christ* in the face of the greatest Danger, lest they should be *exalted above measure* in their own Thoughts, he bids them remember, according to the Discipline of the Gospel, to be humble, and modest, and quiet, that they might preserve the Honour of their Name, and be as glorious in their *Actions*, as they had been in their *Words* and *Confessions* of Christ; that they should imitate their Lord, who was not more proud, but more humble at the time of his Passion, *washing his Apostles feet*; and follow the Counsel and Pattern of St. *Paul*, who in his greatest Sufferings continued meek and humble, and did not arrogate any thing to himself, no not after he had been honoured with a Translation into *Paradise* and the *third Heavens*. And great reason he had to press this with all possible Vehemency at that time, lest Christians by their turbulent and unquiet Carriage should provoke the Heathen Magistrates to greater Severity against them: And indeed who could better do it than he, who was himself so eminent for Humility? For though some *Schismatical* Persons (whose Wildness and Insolence he sought to restrain) endeavoured to insinuate that he was not so humble as became a Man of his Rank and Order, and as were our *Lord* and his *Apostles*; yet observe how he vindicates himself in a Letter to *Pupianus*, the Head of the Party: As for my Humility (*says he*) 'tis sufficiently known, not only to the Brethren, but the *Gentiles* themselves do see and respect it, and thou thy self didst know and honour it, whilst thou was't yet in the Church, and didst communicate with me: But which of us, I pray, is fartheſt from Humility; I, who daily serve the Brethren, and receive those who come unto the Church with all Joy and Kindness; or *Thou*, who makest thy self a *Bishop* over thy *Bishop*, and pretendest to be a Judg appointed by God over him who is thy Judg? And indeed

Chap. 1.

Epist. 5. *Presb. & Diacon.* p. 13.

Epist. 69. p. 116.

Part II. indeed how far the good Man was from any Designs of Greatness and Domination appear'd in this, that when the People had universally chosen him to be *Bishop*, he privately withdrew and retir'd himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honourable an Office, and giving way to others, whose Age and Experience rendred them (as he thought) much fitter for it: But the Importunity of the People be gheightned into a greater Impatiency, and having found where he was, they beset the House, and blocked up all Passages of escape till they had found him, and forc'd it upon him. And with no less Humility did he behave himself in the discharge of it: When consulted by some of his *Clergy* what they should do in the case of the *lapsed*, he answers, That being now alone he could say nothing to it, for that he had determined from his first entring upon his Bishoprick, not to adjudg any thing by his own *private* Order, without the Counsel of the *Clergy*, and the Consent of the *People*. So meanly did that wise and excellent Man think of himself, and so much did he attribute to the Judgment and Concurrence of those that were below him.

Pontius Diac. in vit. Cypr. p. 12.

Ep. 5. *p.* 13, 14.

Nazianzen reports of his Father (a *Bishop* too) that amongst other Vertues he was peculiarly remarkable for *Humility*; which he did not express *Philosopher-like* in little Arts of external *Modes*, and Carriage, putting on a feign'd Behaviour, like Women, who having no *natural* Beauty of their own, fly to the *Additionals* of Dresses and Paintings δι' ἐνσημασύνην ἀσχήμονες, becoming more deformed by their ascititious Beauty. His Humility consisted not in his *Dress*, but in the *Constancy* of his Mind; not in the *hanging down* of his Head, or the *Softness* of his Tone, or the *Demureness* of his Look, or the *Gravity* of his Beard, or the shaving of his Head [the *cropping of his Hair*] or the Manner of his Gate; but in the Frame and

Orat. 19. *in laud. Patr. p.* 300.

and Temper of his Soul, being as humble in his Mind, as he was *sublime* and excellent in his Life; and when no Man could arrive at the Perfection of his Vertues, yet every one was admitted to a freedom of Converse with him. Both in his Garb and Diet he equally avoided *Pomp* and *Sordidness*; and though a great restrainer of his Appetite, would yet seem not to do it, lest he should be thought plainly to design glory to himself, by being *needlessly* singular above other Men. How industriously do we find them many times disowning that deserved Praise and Commendation that was due to them? How modestly does *Justin Martyr* decline his Adversary's commendation of the Acuteness and Elegancy of his Reasonings? resolving all into the *Grace of God*, that enabled him to understand and expound the *Scriptures*, of which Grace he there persuades all Men freely and fully to become partakers with him. Of the *Confessors* in the time of the Persecution under *M. Aurelius*, *Eusebius* out of the relation which the Churches of *Vienna* and *Lyons* in *France* sent to the Churches in *Asia*, tells us, that although they had often born witness to the Truth at the dearest rate of any thing on this side Death, though they had been frequently thrown to wild *Beasts*, exposed to the *Fire*, and the remains of Wounds and Violence were visible in all parts of their Bodies; yet in imitation of the great Humility of the Son of God, they would not after all this (which yet was not uncommon in those times) either *call* themselves *Martyrs*, or suffer others to call them so: but if any of the Brethren either by Letter or Discourse had saluted them by that Title, they would severely reprove and check them for it; acknowledging themselves at best but vile and despicable *Confessors*, and with Tears begging of the Brethren to be instant with God by Prayer, that they might perfect all by a real Martyrdom. Hence it was, that when

Chap. 1.

Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 280.

Hist. Eccl. lib. 5. c. 2. p. 166.

Julian

Part II.

Julian the *Apostate* refused to proceed against the Christians by open Persecution, as his Predecessors had done, because he envied them the *Honour* of being *Martyrs*; *Nazianzen* answers, that he was greatly mistaken if he supposed they suffered all this, rather out of a desire of *Glory*, than a love of *Truth*. Such a foolish and vain-glorious Humour might indeed be found amongst his *Philosophers*, and the best of his Party, many of whom have put themselves upon strange Attempts, meerly to gain the Honour of a Name, and the Reputation of *Divinity*: But for Christians, they had rather *die* in the Cause of Religion, although no Man should ever know of it, than to live and flourish amongst others with the greatest Honour and Esteem; it being our great Solicitude not to please *Men*, but only to obtain Honour from God: Nay, some of us (*says he*) arrive to that *heroick* Pitch, as to desire an intimate *Union* unto God meerly for himself, and not for the Honours and Rewards that are laid up for us in the other World.

Orat. 3. (*in Julian.* 1.) *p.* 73.

Memorable is the Humility of the great *Constantine*, that when all Mens Mouths were filled with the honourable mention of his Vertues, and one took upon him to praise him to his Face, telling him how happy he was whom God had thought worthy of so great an *Empire* in this World, and for whom he reserved a much better *Kingdom* in the next; he was highly offended with the Address, and advised the Man that he should not presume to talk so any more; but rather turn his *Praises* of him into *Prayers* to God for him, that both here and hereafter he might be thought worthy to be numbred amongst the Servants of God.

De Vit. Constant. lib. 4. *cap.* 48. *p.* 551.

I cannot but take notice of what * St. *Hierom* reports of *Nebridius*, a young *Roman Gentleman*, Cousin-German to the *Empress*, by whom he was brought up in the Palace, Play-fellow and Companion to the

* *Ad Salvinam Nebridii viduam, de viduit. servand. p.* 75. *tom.* 1.

the young Emperors (to whom he was very dear) trained up with them in the same Studies and Arts of Education; that notwithstanding all this, and that he was then in the Prime and Vigour of his Youth, yet he was neither *debauched* by Intemperance, amidst the Delicacies and Pleasures of the Court, nor *swell'd* with Pride, reflecting upon others with a surly Look; but rendred himself amiable unto all: The Princes he lov'd as Brethren, and *rever'd* as Lords; their Attendants and Ministers, and all the Orders of the Palace he had so endeared by Kindness and Condescension, that they who were so much below him, did in a manner think themselves *equal* to him. Chap. 1.

I shall give but one Instance more of the Humility of those times, and that is, their ready condescending to any *Office* or Imployment, though never so mean, about the poorest Christian: They thought it not below them to *cook* and *provide* Victuals for them, to *visit* the Imprisoned, to *kiss* their Chains, to *dress* their Wounds, to *wash* their Feet. And in this our Lord himself went before them, when a little before his Death he rose from Table, girt himself, *wash'd and wip'd his Disciples Feet*, and then told them what Influence this ought to have upon them, *That if their Lord and Master had washed their Feet, they ought also to wash one another's Feet, for that he had given them an Example, that they should do as he had done to them*; and good reason, *the Servant not being greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.* Accordingly we find this particular Act of Christian Condescension frequently us'd in the Primitive Church. St. *Paul* expresly requires it as a Qualification in a *Widow* that was to be taken in as a *Deaconess* into the Church, that she be *one that has us'd to lodge Strangers, and to wash* 1 *Tim.* 5. 10.

Part II. the *Saints Feet*. *Tertullian* assures us, 'twas usually done by Christians in his time, to go into the Prisons to *kiss* and embrace the Martyrs Chains, to *harbour* and provide for indigent Brethren, and to bring Water to wash the Saints Feet: No Office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

Ad uxor. l. 2. c. 4. p. 168.

Theodoret. H. Ecc. lib. 5. c. 18. p. 161.

When *Placilla* the Empress was check'd by some of the *Court* for her mighty Condescension in visiting the *Hospitals*, and curing the Lame and the Sick with her *own Hands*, preparing and giving them their Provisions, as a thing too much below her State and *Grandeur*; she answered, That to distribute Gold became the *Emperor*, but for her part she thought her self obliged to do this for *God*, who had advanc'd her to that Honour and Dignity: Often instilling this pious Counsel into her Husband, *It becomes you, Sir, always to remember, what you once were, and what you now are; by which means you will shew your self not to be ungrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you justly and lawfully, and to the honour of him that gave it.*

Epitaph. Paulæ ad Eustoch. filiam. Tom. 1. p. 175.

St. *Hierom* reckoning up the Vertues of *Paula*, a Lady of the greatest Descent and Nobility in *Rome*, but devoting her self afterwards to the Solitudes of a Religious Life; tells us of her, That for Humility (the *prime* and chief Vertue of *Christians*) she carried her self with so much Lowliness, that whoever had seen and not known her, could not but have mistaken her for the meanest of the Maids that waited on her. Whenever she appeared in the midst of those devout and pious Virgins that dwelt with her, she always seem'd both in *Clothes* and *Voice*, and *Garb*, and *Gate*, the least and most contemptible of all the rest. So studious was the Piety of those Days to keep the Lustre of their own Perfections from sparkling in their Eyes, and not fondly to admire the *Glimmerings* of their own Light; being so far from

from falsly arrogating to themselves those Excellencies which they had not, that they industriously conceal'd those excellent Perfections which they had! Chap. 1.

I cannot better conclude this Chapter, than with the excellent Reasonings of St. *Gregory* of *Nyssa* against *priding* a Man's self in any external Ornaments or Advantages; where he thus entertains the proud Man: He that looks to *himself*, and not to the things that are about him, will see little reason to be *proud*: For what is *Man?* Say the best of him, and that which may add the greatest Honour and Veneration to him, that he's *born* of *Nobles*; and yet he that adorns his Descent, and speaks highliest of the Splendor and Nobility of his House, does but derive his Pedigree from the *Dirt*. And to enquire more narrowly into the manner of his being born into the World common with other Men, were to uncover what Shame and Modesty require should be concealed in the profoundest Silence. And dost thou not [illegible], thou *Statue* of *Earth*, who art shortly to be crumbled into *Dust*, who *Bubble-like* containest within thee a short-liv'd humour? Dost thou not *blush* to swell with Pride and Arrogance, and to have thy Mind stuffed with vain idle Thoughts? Hast thou no regard to the double term of Man's Life, *how* it *begun*, and where it will *end?* Thou prides thy self in thy *juvenile* Age, and flatterest thy self in the Flower, the Beauty and Sprightliness of thy Youth, that thy *Hands* are ready for *Action*, and thy *Feet* apt to dance nimble *Measures*; that thy Locks are *wav'd* by the wanton Motions of the Wind, and a soft Down over-grows thy Cheeks; that thy purple Robes put the very *Roses* to the blush, and thy silken Vestures are *variegated* with rich Embroidery of *Battels*, *Huntings*, or Pieces of antient *History*; or brought down to the Feet, artificially set off with black, and curi-

De beatitudinib. Orat. 1. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 768.

Part II. curiouſly made faſt with *Strings* and *Buttons*. Theſe are the things that thou look'ſt at, without any regard to *thy ſelf*. But let me a little, as in a *Glaſs*, ſhew thee thy own Face, *who* and *what* thou art: Haſt thou not ſeen in a publick *Charnel-houſe* the unveiled Myſteries of Human Nature; *Bones* rudely thrown upon Heaps; naked *Skulls* with hollow *Eyeholes*, yielding a dreadful and deformed Spectacle? Haſt thou not beheld their *grinning* Mouths, and *ghaſtly* Looks, and the reſt of their Members careleſly diſperſed and ſcattered? If thou haſt beheld ſuch Sights as theſe, in *them* thou haſt ſeen thy ſelf. Where then will be the Signs of thy preſent Beauty, that good *Complexion* that adorns thy Cheeks and the colour of thy Lips, that frightful *Majeſty* and ſupercilious Loftineſs that once reſided in thine Eyes, or thy Noſe that once beautifully grac'd thy Cheeks? Where are thy Locks that were wont to reach thy Shoulders, the Curls that uſed to adorn thy Temples? What are become of thoſe Arms that uſed to draw the *Bow*, thoſe Leggs that uſed to beſtride thy *Horſes?* Where's the *Purple*, the *ſilken Garments*, the *long Robe*, the *Belt*, the *Spurs*, the *Horſe*, the *Race*, the *Noiſe* and *Prancings*; and all the reſt of thoſe things that now add Fuel to thy Pride? Tell me, where then will thoſe things be, upon the account whereof thou doſt now ſo much *boaſt* and *bear* up thy ſelf? Was there ever any *Dream* ſo fond and inconſtant, any thing more *fantaſtick* that ever appeared to a Man aſleep? What *Shadow* was ever ſo thin, ſo incapable of being graſped within the Hollow of the Hand, as this Dream of Youth, which at once *appears*, and immediately *vaniſhes* away. Thus the Holy Man treats the young vapouring Gallant, and levels his Pride with the ſober Conſiderations of Mortality. In his following Diſcourſe he deals with Perſons of riper Years,

Years, and ſuch as are in Places of *Authority* and Power, and ſhews how abſurd and uncomely Pride is in them; which it might not be impertinent to repreſent, but fearing to be tedious, I forbear. Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

Of their Heavenly-Mindedneſs, and Contempt of the World.

The Soul rightly conſtituted naturally tends upwards, eſpecially when aſſiſted with the Aids of Religion. The firſt Chriſtians much above the World. Not wrought upon by Temptations of Advantage. They accounted it the greateſt Honour to be Chriſtians. Contented with a very mean Portion of outward things. The Story of ſome of our Saviour's Kindred brought before Domitian. *The Sect of the* Apoſtolici *and* Apotactici, *the Fathers of the Mendicant Orders in the Church of* Rome. *The little Care which Chriſtians then had of rich Furniture and coſtly Proviſions. Their denying to go to publick Feaſts and Sports made for the Pleaſure of the People. This charged upon them by the Heathens. The Caſe of the Woman that was ſeized upon by an Evil Spirit while ſhe was at the Theatre. Their chearful parting with any worldly Comforts, Eſtates, Relations,* &c. *A ſtrange Heroick Speech of* Melania *at the loſs of her Husband and two Sons, mentioned by*

St. Hierom. *Eager for Martyrdom, as what would presently send them to Heaven. Their frequent supporting themselves under Sufferings with Discourses of the Kingdom above. Thence accused as treasonable Affecters of the Empire. Their Contempt of the World much promoted by the Opinion, that the Day of Judgment was near at hand. Christians in the World like Sojourners in a strange Country.*

THE Soul of Man being *Heaven-born*, cannot but partake of the Nature and Disposition of that Country, and have a Native Inclination to that place from whence it borrows its *Original:* And though, 'tis true, in this corrupt and *degenerate* State, it is deeply sunk into *Matter*, clogg'd and overborn with the earthly and sensual Propensions of the lower Appetites, the Desires and Designs of Men creeping up and down like *Shadows* upon the Surface of the Earth; yet does it often, especially when assisted with the Aids of *Religion*, attempt its own Rescue and Release. The Mind of a good Man is acted by manly and *generous* Impulses, it dwells in the Contemplations of the *upper* Region, tramples upon those little Projects of Profit or Pleasure which *ensnare* and *enslave* other Men, and make all its Designs subservient to the Interests of a better Country: A Temper of Mind never more triumphant in any than in the *Christians* of old, whose *Conversations were in Heaven*, and whose Spirits breath'd in too free an Air to be caught with the Charms of the best Enjoyments this World could afford: They looked upon the Delights and Advantages of this Life, as things not worthy to arrest their Affections in their Journey to a better. *Justin Martyr* discoursing with *Trypho* the *Jew*,

Jew, tells him, That they were careful with all fear to converse with Men according to the Scriptures, not greedily desiring to gain *Riches*; or *Glory*, or *Pleasure* to themselves, concerning any of which no Man could lay any thing to their Charge; and that they did not live like the great Men of *his People*, of whom God himself has left this reproachful Character, *That their Princes were Companions of Thieves, every one loving Gifts, and following after Rewards.* Chap. 2. *Dyal. cum Tryph. p.* 308.

Nay, *Trypho* himself bears them this Testimony, though doubtless he intended it as a Reproach to them, That having from a vain Report chosen *Christ* to be their *Master*, they did for his sake foolishly undervalue and throw away all the Enjoyments and Advantages of this World. Amongst us (says *Tatian*) there is no affectation of *vain Glory*, no *Diversity* of Sentiments and Opinions; but separating our selves from all vulgar and earthly Thoughts and Discourses, and having given up our selves to the Commands of God to be govern'd by his Law, we abandon whatever seems but a-kin to Human Glory. They never met with Opportunities to have advantaged and enriched themselves, but they declined and turned them off with a noble Scorn. When *Abgarus* the *Toparch* of *Edessa* offered *Thaddeus* (one of the Seventy Disciples) great Sums of Gold and Silver for the pains he had taken, and the great things he had done amongst them, he refused them with this Answer, *To what purpose should we receive good things from others, who have freely forsaken and renounced our own?* As indeed, in those times Friends and Relations, Houses and Lands were chearfully parted with, when they stood in Competition with Christ; they could content themselves with the most naked Poverty, so it might but consist with the Profession of the Gospel. *Orat. con. Gra. p.* 167. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 1. *c.* 15. *p.* 35.

Part. II.

When *Quintianus* the Preſident, under *Decius* the Emperor, asked *Agatha* the Virgin-Martyr, why, being deſcended of ſuch rich and *illuſtrious* Parents, ſhe would ſtoop to ſuch low and mean Offices as ſhe took upon her? She preſently anſwered him, *Our Glory and Nobility lies in this, that we are the Servants of Chriſt.* To the ſame purpoſe was the anſwer of *Quintinus* the Martyr under the *Dioclesian* Perſecution, when the Preſident asked him, How it came about, that he being a *Roman* Citizen, and the Son of a *Senator*, would truckle under ſuch a *Superſtition*, and worſhip him for a *God*, whom the *Jews* had *Crucified*? The Martyr told him, That it was the higheſt Honour and Nobility to know and ſerve God; that the Chriſtian Religion, which he called Superſtition, ought not to be traduc'd with ſo baſe a Name, ſeeing it immediately guided its Followers to the higheſt Degrees of Happineſs: for herein it is that the Omnipotent God is revealed, the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord, by whom all things were made, and who is in all things equal to his Father.

Martyr. ejus apud Sur. ad diem 5. Feb. tom. 1. ex S. Metaph.

Apud Sur. ad 31. Oct. tom. 5.

The Simplicity of Chriſtians then kept them from aſpiring after Honour and Greatneſs, and if at any time advanced to it, their great Care was to *keep themſelves unſpotted from the World*; as *Nazianzen* reports of his Brother *Cæſarius*, chief Phyſician to the Emperor *Conſtantius*, That though he was very dear to him (as he was to the whole Court) and advanced by him every day to greater Honours and Dignities, yet *this* (ſays he) *was the chief of all*, that he ſuffer'd not the *Nobility* of his Soul to be corrupted by that Glory, and thoſe Delights that were round about him: But accounted this his chiefeſt Honour, that he was a *Chriſtian*; in compariſon of which, all things elſe were to him but as a Sport and *Pageantry*. He looked upon other things but as *Comick* Scenes, ſoon

In laud. Cæſar. frat. Orat. 10. p. 166.

soon up, and as soon over; but upon *Piety*, as the most safe and permanent Good, and which we can properly call our own, regarding that Piety especially which is most inward and unseen to the World. Chap. 2.

The like he relates of his Sister *Gorgonia*, as the Perfection of her excellent Temper, that she did not more *seem* to be good, than she did really *strive* to be so; being peculiarly conversant in those secret Acts of Piety which are visible only to him, who sees what is *hidden and secret*. To the Prince of this World she left nothing, transferring all into those safe and celestial Treasuries that are above: she left nothing to the Earth but her Body, changing all things for the Hopes of a better Life; bequeathing no other *Riches* to her Children, but an excellent *Pattern*, and a Desire to follow her Example. The truth is, as to Estate, they were not concern'd for more than what would supply the Necessities of Nature, or the *Wants* of others; not solicitous to get or possess such Revenues as might make them the Objects either of Mens *Envy*, or their *Fear*; as may appear, amongst others, by this Instance. *In laud. Gorgon. Orat.* 11. *p.* 183.

Domitian the Emperor being informed that there were yet remaining some of Christ's *Kindred according to the Flesh* (the Nephews of *Judas* the Brother of our Lord, of the Race and Posterity of *David*, which the Emperor sought utterly to extirpate) he sent for them, enquired of them, whether they were of the *Line of David?* They answered, they were. He asked what Possessions and *Estate* they had? They told him they had between them *thirty nine Acres of Land* (to the value of about *nine thousand Pence*) out of the Fruits whereof they both paid him *Tribute*, and *maintained* themselves with their own hard Labour, whereto the *Hardness* and *Callousness* of their Hands, which they then shew'd him, bore witness. *Euseb. lib.* 3. *c.* 20. *p.* 89.

Part II. ness. He then ask'd them concerning *Christ*, and the State of his *Kingdom*; to which they answered, That his *Empire was not of this World*, but Heavenly and Angelical, and which should finally take place in the end of the World, when he should come *with Glory to judg both the Quick and the Dead, and to reward Men according to their Works*: Which when he heard, despising the Men upon the account of their Meanness, he let them go without any Severity against them. Of *Origen* we read, that he was so great a Despiser of the World, that when he might have liv'd upon the Maintenance of others, he would not; but parted with his *Library* of Books to one that was to allow him only *four Oboli* a day: the day he spent in laborious Tasks and Exercises, and the greatest [illegible] of the night in Study; he always remembred that Precept of our Saviour, *Not to have two Coats, not to wear Shoes, not anxiously to take care for to morrow*; nor would he accept the Kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some part of their Estate to live on.

Id. lib. 6. c. 3. p. 205.

Not that the Christians of those times thought it *unlawful* to possess Estates, or to use the Blessings of Divine Providence; for though in those times of Persecution they were often forced to quit their Estates and Habitations, yet did they preserve their *Properties* entire, and industriously mind the *necessary* Conveniencies of this Life, so far as was *consistent* with their Care of a better. There were indeed a sort of Christians call'd *Apostolici*, who in a fond Imitation of the *Apostles* left all they had, and gave up themselves to a voluntary Poverty, holding it not lawful to possess any thing: Hence they were also called *Apotactici*, or *Renouncers*, because they quitted and renounced whatsoever they had; but they were ever accounted infamous *Hereticks*: They were, as *Epiphanius* tells us, the Descendants of

of *Tatian*, part of the old *Cathari* and *Encratitæ*; together with whom they are put in a Law of the Emperor *Theodosius*, and reckon'd amongst the vilest of the *Manichæan* Hereticks: mention'd also by *Julian* the *Apostate*, as a Branch of the *Galilæans*, as he calls the Christians, by him compar'd to the *Cynick Philosophers* amongst the Heathens, for the neglecting of their Country, the abandoning of their Estates and Goods, and their loose and rambling Course of Life; only herein different, that they did not as those *Galilæan Apotactistæ*, run up and down under a pretence of Poverty to beg Alms. The truth is, by the Account which both he and *Epiphanius* give of them, they seem to have been the very *Patriarchs* and Primitive Founders of those *Mendicant* Orders, and Professors of vowed Poverty, which swarm so much in the Church of *Rome* at this day. But to return: The Christians of those days did not study those Arts of *Splendour* and *Gallantry* which have since over-run the World, stately Palaces, costly Furniture, rich Hangings, fine Tables, curious Beds, Vessels of Gold and Silver, the very Possession of which (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks) creates Envy; they are rare to get, hard to keep, and, it may be, not so accommodate to use. Will not a Knife cut as well (*says he*) though it have not an *Ivory-haft*, or be not garnished with Silver, or an *earthen* Bason serve to wash the Hands? Will not the *Table* hold our Provisions, unless its Feet be made of *Ivory*? Or the Lamp give its *Light*, although made by a *Potter*, as well as if it were the work of the *Goldsmith*? May not a Man sleep as well upon a *mean* Couch, as upon a Bed of *Ivory*? Upon a *Goat-Skin*, as well as upon a *Purple* or *Phœnician* Carpet? Our *Lord* eat his Meat out of a *common* Dish, and made his Followers sit upon the *Grass*, and *washed* his Disciples Feet, without ever fetching down a *silver* Bowl from Heaven:

Chap. 2.

Contr. Apostolic. Hæres. 61. *pag.* 220.

Cod. Theod. lib. 16. *tit.* 5. *de Hæret. l.* 7.

De Cynic. Sect. Orat. 7. *p.* 417.

Pædag. lib. 2. *c.* 3. *p.* 160, 161.

Part II. ven: he took the Water which the *Samaritaneſs* had drawn in an *Earthen Pitcher*, not requiring one of God, ſhewing how eaſy it was to quench his Thirſt; for he reſpected the *Uſe*, not the vain and ſuperfluous State of things. This and much more he there urges to this excellent purpoſe, to let us ſee how little a Chriſtian need be beholden to the World, if he be content with what's enough for the neceſſary Uſes of Human Life.

De Orat. Domin. Orat. 5. *p.* 745. *tom.* 1. *Vid. Cypr. de Orat. Dom. p.* 192.

To this let me annex ſome part of that Diſcourſe which *Gregory Nyſſen* has upon this Subject: The fluid and tranſitory Condition of Man's Life (*ſays he*) calls for a daily *Raparation* of the decays of Nature. He therefore that looks no farther than to miniſter to the *Deſires* of Nature, and troubles not himſelf with vain anxious thoughts for more than's *neceſſary*, lives little leſs than the Life of Angels, whilſt by a Mind content with little he imitates their want of nothing. For this cauſe we are commanded to ſeek only what's enough to keep the Body in its due State and Temper, and thus to addreſs our Prayers to God, *Give us our daily Bread.* Give us *Bread*, not *Delicacies* or *Riches*, not ſplendid and purple *Veſtures*, or rich golden *Ornaments*; not *Pearls* and Jewels, Silver-*Veſſels*, large *Fields*, and great *Poſſeſſions*; not the Government of *Armies*, the Conduct of *Wars*, and diſpoſal of *Nations*; not numerous *Flocks* and Herds of Cattel, or multitudes of *Slaves*, and Servants, not Splendour and Gallantry in Publick; not Marble-*Pillars*, or *Brazen* Statues, or Silken *Carpets*, or *Quires* of *Muſick*, or any of thoſe things by which the Soul is diverted, and drawn from more *Noble* and *Divine* Thoughts and Cares: but only *Bread*, which indeed is the true and common Staff of Man's Life.

Minut. F. p. 10. *vid. Conſtit. Apoſtol. ib.* 2. *c.* 62. *p.* 836.

Nor were they more ſtudious of *Pleaſures* and Recreations *abroad*, than they were of Fineneſs and Bravery

very at *home*: They went not to Publick *Feasts*, nor frequented the *Shews* that were made for the Disport and Entertainment of the People; and this was so notorious, that the Heathens charged it upon them as part of their *Crime*. Observe how he in *Minutius Fælix* draws it up: The *Romans (says he)* govern and enjoy the World, while *you* in the mean time are careful and *mopish*, abstaining even from *lawful* Pleasures; you visit not the *Shews*, nor are present at the *Pomps*, nor frequent the *publick* Feasts; you abhor the holy *Games*, the sacrificial *Meats* and *Drinks*, *crown* not your Heads with *Garlands*, nor *perfume* your Bodies with sweet Odours; a ghastly, fearful, and miserable People. Which by that time that *Octavius* the Christian comes to answer, he grants it all to be true, and tells him there was very good reason why they should abstain from their Shews, Pomps, and Divertisements, at which they could not be present without great Sin and Shame, without affronting their Modesty, and offering a Distaste and Horror to their Minds. And indeed they reckon'd themselves particularly oblig'd to this, by what they had vowed and undertaken at their Baptism, when they solemnly engaged to *renounce the Devil and all his Works, Pomps and Pleasures, i. e.* (says St. *Cyril*) the Sights and Sports of the *Theatre*, and such like *Vanities*. The Truth is, they looked upon the publick Sports and Pastimes of those days as the *Scenes* not only of *Folly* and *Lewdness*, but of great *Impiety* and *Idolatry*; as places where the *Devil* eminently rul'd, and reckon'd all his *Votaries* that came thither. Accordingly *Tertullian* tells us of a *Christian Woman*, who going to the *Theatre*, was their possessed by the Devil; and when the Evil Spirit at his casting out was ask'd, how he durst set upon a Christian? he presently answered, *I did but what was fit and just, for I found her upon my own ground.*

Chap. 2.

Pag. 30.

Catech. Myst. 1. *p.* 510.

De spect. c. 26. *p.* 83.

Being

Part II.

Being thus affected towards the World, they could very willingly part with any thing that was dearest to them, *Friends*, *Estate*, *Liberty*, or *Life* it self. We are not moved (*says one of their Apologists*) with the Loss of our *Estates* which our Enemies wrest from us, nor with the *Violence* that's offer'd to our *Credit* and Reputation, or if there be any thing of greater *Concernment* than these; for although these things are mightily prized and valued amongst Men, yet can we despise and slight them: Nay, we cannot only, when *beaten*, refrain from striking again, and make no *resistance* against those that invade and spoil us; but to them that *smite one Cheek we can turn the other*, *and to them that take away the Coat*, *we can let them take the Cloak also.* And I remember *Nazianzen* tells us, That of those Excellencies and Endowments which God had given him, *Health*, *Wealth*, *Esteem*, and *Eloquence*, he reaped this only Benefit, that he had something which he could *contemn*, and by which he could shew that he infinitely valued *Christ* before them. The greatest endearment of this life is *Relations*, and yet these too they could quietly resign when God called for them. Memorable it is, what St. *Hierom* reports of *Melania*, a Lady of great Piety in his time, in whose Commendation *Paulinas*, Bishop of *Nola*, spends a very large Epistle, especially commending her for her *generous* and heroick Mind, *tam viriliter Christiana*, that she was something above a Woman, and had the *Masculine* Spirit of a Christian. Of this Lady, St. *Hierom* tells us, That her *Husband* lying dead by her, she lost *two of her Sons* at the same time; and when every one expected that she should break out into a violent Passion, tear her Hair, rent her Garments, and burst into Tears; she stood still, and at last falling down, as 'twere at the Feet of *Christ*, broke out into this Pious and Christian Resentment

Athan. leg. pro Christ. p. 2.

Orat. 1. p. 32.

Ad Paul. tom. 1. p. 160.

Epist. l. 2. Epist. 2.

sentment, *Lord, I shall serve thee more nimbly and readily, by being eased of the Weight thou hast taken from me.* Nay, so little kindness had they for this World, that they cared not how *little* they stayed in it; and therefore readily offered themselves to *Martyrdom* at every turn. *Tertullian* tells his Adversaries, that all those Plagues which God sent upon the World, what damage soever they might do their Enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other Concernment in this World, than as *soon* as they could to get out of it. This, he elsewhere tells us, the very *Gentiles* assign'd as one Reason, why the Christians were trained up in a Defiance of all the Sports and Pleasures of this Life, that they might be more willing to die; and that the Cords being cut by which they were tedder'd to this World, they might be more nimble and expedite for their Passage hence. Their main Designs were intent upon the Happiness of another World, and therefore they regarded not what they went through to come sooner to it. Being inflamed (says *Justin Martyr*) with the desire of a pure and an *eternal* Life, we breathe after an *intimate* Converse with God the great Parent and Creator of the World, and make haste to *seal* our Confession with our *Blood*; being certainly persuaded that they shall attain to this State, who by their actions study to approve themselves to God, that they follow after him, and are heartily desirous of Communion with him in that Life, where no Malice or Wickedness shall take place. This was the mighty Support they lean'd upon, the great Cordial with which they kept up their Spirits in those sad times of Suffering and Persecution, the firm *Belief* and Expectation which they had of enjoying God in a better Life. They knew, that the more haste their Enemies made to *break open the Cage* of their Bodies, the sooner their Souls would be at liberty

Chap. 2.

Apol. c. 41. p. 33.

De Spect. c. 1. p. 73.

Apol. 2. p. 57.

Part II. liberty to *fly* to the Regions of Blessedness and Immortality. And indeed so much were their thoughts fixed upon this, so often did they use to comfort one another by discoursing of that *Kingdom* which they expected hereafter, that some of their Enemies over-hearing and mistaking them, accused them as *treasonable Affecters* of the *Empire:* when alas! (as *Ib. p.* 58. *Justin Martyr* assures the *Emperors*) they meant nothing less; which they might know by this, that being brought to Tryal, they freely confessed themselves to be Christians, though they certainly knew they must die for it: Whereas (*said he*) did we expect an *Human Kingdom*, we would dissemble and deny it, and avoid Death, and so expect a more convenient Season to accomplish our Designs; but since our Hopes are not placed in any thing in this World, we regard not those that take away our Lives, well knowing they take nothing from us, but what we must needs lay down our selves. It was their care then continually to *keep company* with *dying* thoughts, *Epitaph. Marcell. ad Princip. p.* 119. and to dwell within the prospect of Eternity; it being generally true of all, what St. *Hierom* particularly reports of *Marcella*, That she *lived* so as always believing that she should immediately *die*, and never put on her *Garments*, but it put her in mind of her *Grave*, and of the *Sheet* that should wrap her up in the *House of Silence*.

But besides the influence which the expectation of their particular *Dissolutions* had upon them, there was one thing which I doubt not did mightily contribute to their being *wean'd* from the World, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy diligence about the Affairs of the other Life; and that was, the *Opinion* they generally had of the *Day of Judgment being near at hand*. An *Opinion* started early, as appears by that Caution which St. *Paul* gives the *2 Thes.* 2. 3, 4. *Thessalonians* about it, and it lasted for some Ages after,

after, as is evident from several Passages in *Tertullian*, who always improves it to this purpose, that Men should not unnecessarily encumber themselves with the Affairs of this Life, but carry themselves as those that were immediately passing hence. I conclude with that of *Justin Martyr:* Christians *(says he)* dwell in their own Countries but as *Inmates* and *Foreigners*; they have all things common with other Men as *Fellow-Citizens*, and yet suffer all things as *Strangers* and *Foreigners:* Every *foreign Region* is their *Country*, and every Country is *foreign* to them: They *marry* like other Men, and beget Children, but do not *expose* or neglect their Offspring; they *feast* in common, but do not *exceed* like other Men; they *are in the Flesh*, but do not *live after the Flesh*; dwell upon *Earth*, but their *Conversation is in Heaven.* Therefore he compares Christians in this World to the *Soul* in the *Body*, as for other reasons, so especially for this, that as the Soul lives *in* the Body, but is not *of* the Body; so Christians dwell *in* the World, but are not *of* the World: An *immortal Spirit* dwells in a *mortal Tabernacle*, and Christians, while they sojourn in these *corruptible* Mansions, expect and look for an *incorruptible* State in Heaven.

Vid. de cult. fœmin. lib. 2. c. 9. ad uxor. lib. 1. c. 5. Epist. ad Diognet. p. 497.

CHAP. III.

Of their Sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

Much of the Temper of the Mind shewn in the outward Garb. The great Ends of Clothes, for Honesty, Necessity, Distinction. The Primitive Christians accommodated themselves to these. Careful to avoid both Singularity and Excess. Generally conformable to the sober Fashions of the Places where they lived. Whether when they turned Christian, they left off the Roman *Gown, and took up the* Pallium *or Cloak,* à Toga ad Pallium. *The occasion of* Tertullian's *writing his excellent Book on that Subject. The* Pallium *principally worn by those that entred upon a Life of more than ordinary strictness. Their great Care to keep a* Medium *between Costliness and Sordidness. This accounted part of that Pomp and Vanity which they renounced in Baptism. The Vanity of excessive Garbs and Finery complain'd of by the Fathers in some of those times. Especially invective against Methods of artificial Beauty: What pleaded in defence of it, by some Persons in those days, considered and answered out of the Fathers. That they were rich, no sufficient Argument to patronize the doing of it. Better ways of imploying their Estates. Nor that they could do it without violating their Chastity. The Inconveniences*

veniences of it with respect to others. That they did it to please their Husbands, answered. This needless: Every wise and good Man content without it. Such Arts savoured too much of leud wanton Prostitutes. Painting and such Arts injurious to God, and a Disparagement of his Workmanship. This largely prosecuted out of Tertullian *and* Cyprian. *A memorable Story which* Theodoret *relates of his own Mother. True Beauty accounted to lie in a holy and vertuous Mind, and a pure and pious Life. Gay and fantastick Persons fitly represented by the* Egyptian *Temples.* Nazianzen's *Description of his good Sister* Gorgonia. Chap. 3.

THE Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their Contempt of the World, 'tis easy to imagine that they were very *temperate* and *abstemious* in the use of all the Pleasures and Conveniences of human Life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three Instances; their *Sobriety* in respect of *Garb* and *Apparel*, their *Temperance* in regard of *Food* and *Diet*, and their *Continence* or *Chastity*.

For the first, the *care* about our *Garb* and *Dress*, it is one of those Instances of *Sobriety* which are to be conducted by the Rules of Religion and Reason, and which very much discover a vertuous or a vicious Temper: *There are three things* (as the Son of *Syrach* well observes) *that shew a Man what he is, his Attire, excessive Laughter, and his Gate.* There is not certainly a more open Evidence of a *vain Mind*, than a *vain Garb* and *Habit*. St. *Basil* discoursing what Habit does best beseem a *Christian*, tells us in general, that it ought to be such as most lively expresses

Reg. fus. Disput. interrog. 22. *p.* 566. *Tom.* 2.

Part. II. preſſes the Meekneſs and Humility of the Mind; that good Men of old were ſo attir'd, and that we are commanded, *having Food and Raiment to be therewith content*; not ſtudying *Variety*, and which moſt commonly follows it, *Softneſs and Elegancy*, which are but Inſtruments to miniſter to Exceſs and Luxury, introduc'd into human Life thro the idle and unneceſſary Arts of Looſeneſs and Effeminacy. 'Tis not enough (ſays *Tertullian*) that a Chriſtian be chaſte and modeſt, but he muſt appear to be ſo; a Virtue, of which he ſhould have ſo great a Store and Treaſure, that it ſhould flow from his *Mind* upon his *Habit*, and break from the Retirements of his *Conſcience* into the *Superficies* of his *Life*, as he there expreſſes it. More particularly St. *Baſil* tells us, That the Habit of a Chriſtian ought to be ſuitable to the two great *Ends* of Clothing inſtituted by *God*, *viz.* *Honeſty* and *Neceſſity*; *Honeſty* to hide the leſs comely Parts of the Body, and to cover that Shame which Sin has brought upon Mankind: in Paradiſe *Innocency* was Man's only *Robe*, 'twas Sin brought in the *Fig-leav'd* Coat; and what ſhould more induce us to be modeſt in our Apparel, than to remember, that our Clothes are *Monitors* of our Apoſtacy, and that there's little reaſon we ſhould *pride* our ſelves in that which is only a Cover for our *Shame? Neceſſity*; and ſo Clothes were deſigned to keep the Body in convenient Warmth, and to defend it from thoſe Injuries and Extremities of the Air and Weather, which would otherwiſe ſoon rot down this Houſe of Clay. Now to both theſe ends (he tells us) we ought to accommodate our Garments, not ſtriving for variety, having ſome for Uſes at home, others for Oſtentation when we go abroad; but that whatever attains theſe Ends, is enough. But beſides theſe, there is a third *Uſe* and *End* of Clothes noted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and that is for *Diſtinction*, not

De cultu fœmin. lib. 2. *c.* 13. *p.* 160.

Ib. p. 567.

Vid. Cyril. ad Illumin. Catec. 4. *p.* 94.

Pædag. lib. 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 245.

not only of *Sexes*, but of different *Ranks* and De- Chap. 3.
grees of Men; such as agree best to Mens *Age*, *Persons*, *Shape*, *Nature*, or their several States and *Employments*; in these respects Men may use different and distinguishing Habits: Nay, he grants, that in some Cases Men may recede from the strict Rule and Discipline of this Affair, and that such Women as cannot otherwise gain upon their Husbands, may (if they require it) go a little more *trim* and neat, provided (as he there limits it) it be done only to *please* and gain upon their Husbands, and that they do not practise any Artifices of unlawful Beauty.

Now that the *antient Christians* governed themselves by these Rules in this Affair, is plain, in that they avoided both *Singularity* on the one hand, and *Excess* on the other, generally conforming themselves to the *decent* and *orderly* Customs and Fashions of the Times and Places where they liv'd. *Justin Martyr* giving his Friend an account of the Christians, tells him, that they differ'd not from other Men, either in their *Country*, or *Speech*, or the *Usages* of the Civil Life: they dwell in their own Cities, use the same Language with other Men, nor have they any singular and extraordinary way of Life; they are not in any thing affected or fantastick; but inhabiting partly amongst *Greeks*, partly in *barbarous* Cities, as every one's Lot is fallen, they follow the Customs of their Country; and both in Clothes and Diet, and all other Affairs of outward Life, shew the excellent and admirable Constitution of their Discipline and Conversation. I am not ignorant of what some learned Men would have us to believe, that in those times, when any turned from *Paganism* to *Christianity*, they were wont to *change* their *Habit*, to leave off the *Toga* or *Gown* (the common Habit almost in all parts of the *Roman* Empire) and to take up the *Pallium* or *Cloak*: and this they think sufficiently

Epist. ad Diog. p. 496.

Part II. ciently countenanced by the Instance of *Tertullian*, who laying aside the Gown, and putting on the Cloak, was accused of Lightness and Inconstancy by the People of *Carthage*, and bitterly persecuted with the common Sarcasm, *à Toga ad Pallium*, as one that had wantonly skipped from the *Gown* to the *Cloak*, *i. e.* from one Profession to another: insomuch that he was forced to write an Apology for himself, which he did in his Book *de Pallio*, where with a great deal of satyrical and sarcastick Wit he retorts upon them, and vindicates himself from their Charge and Cavils. But that there was any such *Change* of Habit at Persons first coming over to Christianity, I can see no reason to believe; and for the Case of *Tertullian*, it makes nothing to the purpose, unless it could be prov'd that he left off the *Gown* at his first entrance upon the *Christian* Religion, which will be hard to make out: for I am clearly of the mind of the learned *Salmasius*, that he altered his Habit, and assumed the *Cloak* not when he first became *Christian*, but when he was made *Presbyter* of the Church of *Carthage*; whence it is called by him, according to his Dialect, *Sacerdos Habitus* (for so it is in all antient *Manuscripts*, and in the first *Edition* of *B. Rhenanus*, and not *Sacer Habitus*, as later Editions have it) the *Priest's Habit*, because the *Christian Priests* usually wore it after their Entrance upon Holy Orders. For the better understanding of which, we are to consider a little, that amongst the *Greeks*, the *Philosophick Pallium* or Cloak was not commonly worn, but was the proper Habit of Philosophers, who profess'd a more severe and accurate Course of Life. Accordingly amongst the *Christians* those who professed themselves to be ἀσκηταὶ, the more *strict* and *exact* Observers of the Christian Discipline, whether they were *Laity* or *Clergy*, assumed this Habit to themselves. And because the Clergy in those

Præfat. in Comment. Tertul. de Pallio.

Tertul. de Pall. c. 4.

Vid. Tert. ex Edit. B. Rhenani, p. 620. Vid. etiam Salm. id. loc.

those times generally took upon them this austere and philosophick way of Life, this Garb was most peculiar to them; and this probably they did the rather, not only because this was the most plain and simple Garment in it self, but because they supposed the *Apostles* (whom they strove to imitate) wore this Habit, as is plain they did, as from other Passages in the *New Testament*, so from St. *Paul*'s sending for the *Cloak which he left at* Troas. Therefore the Author of the *Apostolical History*, who shelters himself under the name of *Abdias Babylonius*, certainly forgot himself, when describing the Habit of St. *Bartholomew* the *Apostle*, he made it so trim and fine: *Vestitus*, says he, *Colore* (doubtless it should be *Colobio*) *albo*, &c. *he was clothed in a* white *Coat, beset with Studs of* Purple, *over which he had a white* Cloak, *having Purple* Gems *at each Corner of it*; a Piece of Gallantry unknown to the Plainness of those times, and unsuitable to the Profession of that Holy Man. Indeed as Plenty and Prosperity began to flow in upon the Church, this simple and modest Garment was laid aside, and the Clergy took upon them a more rich and splendid Garb; insomuch that when *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastia* took upon him to wear the *Philosophick Cloak*, and persuaded his Followers also to use it, he was for this very reason deposed by his own Father *Eulalius*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, because wearing a Habit unsuitable to the Ministerial Order; which Sentence was, not long after, ratify'd by the Synod of *Gangra*, and a *Canon* made against it.

Chap. 3.

Lib. 8. *fol.* 96. *p.* 2.

Socrat. Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. *c.* 43. *p.* 156. *Vid. Concil. Gangr. Can.* 12.

From what has been said, it may appear, that altho the *Clergy*, and such as entred upon a more strict and *ascetick* Course of Life, had a Habit peculiar to themselves; yet the Generality of Christians differed not from the *common* Garb. They were indeed exceeding careful to avoid all such as savoured

Part II.

of *Coſtlineſs* and *Finery*, chuſing ſuch as expreſſed the greateſt Lowlineſs and Innocency. The Garment that we ſhould wear (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) ought to be mean and frugal, not *curiouſly* wrought with divers Colours (the Emblem of *Craftineſs* and *Deceit*) but *white*, to denote our embracing and profeſſing *Simplicity* and Truth; our outward Clothing is an Indication of the Temper of our Manners: That's true Simplicity of Habit, which takes away what's vain and ſuperfluous; that the beſt and moſt ſolid Garment, which is furtheſt from Art and Curioſity, and moſt apt to preſerve and keep warm the Body.

Ib. ubi ſupra, p. 244.

Pont. Diac. in vit. Cyp. p. 12.

St. *Cyprian* ever obſerved a due *Decorum* in his *Garb* as well as his *Countenance*; his Aſpect was *grave* and yet *chearful*; neither a frowning *Severity*, nor an over-pleaſant *Merrineſs*, but ſuch a happy mixture of both, that it was hard to ſay whether he was more to be *feared* or *loved*, but that he equally deſerved both: And juſt ſuch was his *Garb*, ſober and moderate, keeping a juſt diſtance both from *Slovenlineſs* and *Superfluity*; it neither argued him to be ſwelled with Pride, nor infected with a miſerable and ſordid Mind.

Ad Olymp. Ep. 2. *Tom.* 4. *p.* 617, *&* 623.

Chryſoſtom, amongſt other things, eſpecially commends *Olymphias* (a Woman of great Birth and Eſtate, and of no leſs Piety) for the incredible Modeſty and Meanneſs of her Attire, not much better than that of the pooreſt Beggar; having nothing in her Garb or Gate that was *feigned* or *gaudy*, nothing elaborate or artificial: which things, *ſays he*, were the Colours, the bright and beautiful Repreſentations of her Virtue, whereby that Wiſdom and *Divine* Philoſophy, that lay hidden in her Mind, was externally painted and ſhadowed out. So far were they then from the Vanity and Affection of Pomp and Bravery, of dazling the Eye with rich coſtly Ornaments, that they thought they could never ſeem mean enough; and this they looked upon themſelves as eſpecially

Chap. 3.

ſpecially bound to, by the *Promiſe* which they had made at *Baptiſm*, when they *renounced* the *Devil*, and his whole *Pomp* and *Service*, as the ſame *Father* elſewhere informs us. *Hom.* 21. *ad pop. Antioch. tom.* 1. *p.* 244.

It cannot be denied, but that the Fathers frequently complain of, and ſmartly declaim againſt the Vanity and Folly of ſome in thoſe times (Women eſpecially, by the *weakneſs* of their Sex, more propenſe to the exceſſes of Pride and Superfluity) who gave up themſelves to all the Arts of Fineneſs and Gallantry; and out of an Emulation to the Heathen Ladies, amongſt whom they lived, they affected all manner of *Pomp* and *Elegancy*, ſtriving to be as rich and gaudy, not as they *ought*, but as they *could* make themſelves: whoſe exceſſive Prodigality *Tertullian* does thus no leſs *elegantly* than *ſarcaſtically* deſcribe: A great Eſtate *(ſays he)* is drawn out of a *little* Pocket; it's nothing to expend *many thouſand Pounds* upon one String of *Pearls*; a weak tender Neck can make a ſhift to carry about *whole Woods and Lordſhips:* vaſt Sums of Mony borrowed of the *Banker*, and noted in his Account-book to be repayed every Month with Intereſt, are weighed at the *Beam* of a thin ſlender *Ear*. So great is the ſtrength of Pride and Ambition, that even the *weak* feeble Body of one Woman ſhall be able to carry the *Weight* and Subſtance of ſo many Pounds taken up at *Uſury*. This was looked upon as a very great Sin. *Clemens Alexandrinus* cenſures it very deep; that though Gluttony and Intemperance be great Vices, yet not to be compar'd with a *nice over-curious* ſtudy of Fineneſs and Bravery. I ſuppoſe he means in reſpect of its inſatiable and unbounded Nature: For ſo he adds; A well-furniſhed Table, and Cups that go round, may quickly ſtop the Mouth of a hungry Stomach; but where there is a nice affectation of *Bravery*, of *Gold*, *Purple*, or *Jewels*, there not the Treaſures of the *Creation*; *De Cult. Fœm. lib.* 1. *c.* 8. *p.* 153.

In the *Lat. decies ſeſtertium*, which in our Mony is ſeventy eight thouſand one hundred and twelve Pounds ten Shillings. *Pædag. lib.* 3. *c.* 2. *p.* 219.

Part II. *tion*; not what's *above*, or *under* Ground; not the Spoils of the *Tyrian* Sea; not the Fraughts from *India*, or *Ethiopia*; no, nor *Pactolus* with his golden Streams, would suffice. Nay, such Persons, though as rich as *Midas*, would not yet think themselves rich or fine enough. But that which the Fathers do most severely censure and cry out against, is not only the *Expence* and Costliness of their Clothes and Jewels, but the *Arts* which they used, to add *greater* Beauty and Handsomness to themselves, than God and Nature had bestowed upon them. This, it seems, the Pride and Folly of some Christian Women had arrived to; which the Zeal and Piety of those times did vehemently condemn and protest against. It may not be amiss to consider, what the *Gallants* of those times *pleaded* for themselves, and what was returned in *answer* to them. Sometimes they pleaded, that they were rich, and had great Estates, and ought therefore to live *like themselves*, and to make use of the Estates that God had given them. To this *Cyprian* answers, That they only are *truly* rich, that are rich *in* and *towards* God; that the World ought to be *despised*, the *Pomps* and *Delights* whereof we then *renounc'd*, when we happily turned to God, with the *love* of whom *all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life is not consistent*: That the use of Riches, in this Case, is to be governed by just and moderate measures; the Apostle commanding all Women, how rich soever, *to adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety, not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array; but (which becomes Women professing Godliness) with good Works*: St. *Peter* also requiring of them, not the *outward* adorning of Gold or fine Apparel, but the hidden *Ornament of the Heart*. That though they were rich, yet they were to consult the Honour and Modesty of their Pro-

De discipl. & habit. virgin. p. 164.

Profession, and might not go to the utmost bounds of what was lawful, some things being *lawful*, which were not *expedient*; especially when by their wanton and lascivious Dress, they might be a means to kindle in the Breasts of others, the flames of an unchaste and unlawful Passion, and so prove the occasion of their ruin: That if they thought themselves bound to use the Estate that God had given them, God hath shewn them a *more excellent way*, to relieve the *Hungry*, and feed the *poor Members of Christ*; that this was the best Art of improving Riches, and the way to lay them up in safe and unfailing Treasuries, where we may be sure to reap the Fruit of them another day; and not to throw them away upon Arts of Beauty, upon vain and fantastick Dresses. This is the Sum of that good Man's Reasonings in the Case. Chap. 3. *Vid. Constit. Apost. lib.* 1. *c.* 3. *p.* 804.

Sometimes they pleaded, that they might beautify and honour the Body without any danger of violating their *Chastity*, or setting open the Casement for Luxury to fly in upon them. *Tertullian* answers, Let them that had a mind to't glory in the *Flesh*, that for us we have no designs of glory; partly as being highly unsuitable to us, who by the Law of God are under the Profession of *Humility*; partly because all Glory (to us especially) is vain and swelling; how much more that which arises from the Flesh? If we must glory, 'tis much fitter for us who follow *Spiritual* things, to please our selves in the *Excellencies* of the *Spirit*, than in those of the *Flesh*; let us rejoice in those things about which we are imployed, and seek *glory* from those things, from which we hope for *Salvation*. A Christian may indeed *glory* in the Flesh, but it is when for the sake of *Christ* it is *torn* in pieces, that the *Spirit* may be crowned; not that it may prove a Snare to attract the Eyes and Sights of young Mens ungovernable Passions after it, then *De. cult. fœmin. lib.* 2. *c.* 3. *p.* 155.

Part II. then when 'tis tormented for confeſſing the *Chriſtian* name: When a *Woman* is found ſtronger than the *Man* that torments her, when ſhe ſuffers *Fires*, or *Croſſes*, or *Swords*, or *wild Beaſts*, that ſhe may receive the Crown; theſe (ſays *Cyprian*) are the precious *Jewels* of the Fleſh, theſe the much better *Ornaments* of the *Body*. So that (as *Tertullian* goes on) Beauty being altogether ſo unuſeful to us, ought to be *deſpiſed* by them that want it, and to be *neglected* by them that *have* it. A good Woman that's content with her own native Beauty, has not that occaſion to betray her to Luſt and Folly; and if ſhe had, it would become her, not to *promote*, but *hinder* it. Sometimes again, they pretended they did it only to *pleaſe* their *Husbands*, and that they might appear more *lovely* and *acceptable* to them: To which Plea, as being moſt ſpecious and plauſible, I obſerve eſpecially *Three* things returned by way of anſwer.

Ut ſupr. P. 163.

Tert. Ib. c. 4.

Id. ibid. *Firſt*, That to deſign the pleaſing of their Husbands by ſuch Arts as theſe, was altogether *needleſs*, ſeeing every wiſe and good Man cannot but like his Wife beſt without them. No Wife (ſays *Tertullian*) can ſeem *deformed* to her own Husband, who doubtleſs was well enough pleaſed with her, either for her *Temper*, or her *Beauty*, when he firſt made choice of her: Let none fear their Husbands will more diſtaſte and diſlike them for abſtaining from *artificial* Compoſitions, for every Husband is a rigid exacter of his Wife's Chaſtity; and conſequently they can be of no advantage to this end, whether he be a *believing*, or an *unbelieving* Husband, a *Gentile*, or a *Chriſtian*: If a *Chriſtian*, then he will not require any ſuch *foreign* Beauty, as not being taken with thoſe accompliſhments which the *Gentiles* do account ſo; if a *Gentile*, then according to that vile Opinion which they have of us *Chriſtians*, let her do what ſhe can, he will ſuſpect her to be naught. For whoſe ſake therefore

fore should she so curiously dress, so delicately nurse and nourish up her Beauty? for a *believing* Husband? he requires it not: for an *Infidel?* he'll never believe it to be *true:* Why then should she so much desire to *please* either one that *suspects* it, or one that does not *desire* it? Chap. 3.

Secondly, That these loose delicate Arts came too near the Practice of lewd wanton *Prostitutes*, who made use of these ways and tricks for no other end but to *enveigle* Men into their Embraces. The bravery of Ornaments and Apparel, and the additional Enticements of Beauty are chiefly used (as *Cyprian* tells them) by Prostitutes and unchaste Women; and that no Womens *Garb* is more *rich* and *gaudy*, than theirs, whose *Modesty* is most *vile* and *cheap*. And this he tells us the *Scripture* shadows out by the *Woman that was arrayed in purple and scarlet Colour, and decked with Gold and precious Stones and Pearls; having a golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations and Filthiness of her Fornication.* But chaste and modest Virgins shun the Dresses of the defiled, the Habit of the Shameless, the Badges of the Stews, the Ornaments of light wanton Women. Whereas all other Creatures (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) Birds and Beasts are content with their own natural Beauty and Colours; *Woman* only, as if she were inferiour to the Beasts, thinks her self so deform'd, as that there's need to repair the defect by external, bought, and borrowed Beauty: For while by infinite Arts of curious and costly Dresses (some whereof he there particularly mentions) they seek to *ensnare* them, who, Children-like, are apt to admire every thing that's strange and gaudy, they shew themselves to be Women that have put off Shame and Modesty; and whoever (* *says he*) calls them so, shall do them no wrong, as carrying the *Signs* and Representations of it in their very Faces.

Ubi supr. p. 165. *vid. Tert. de cult. fœmin. lib.* 1. *c.* 4.

Pædag. lib. 3. *c.* 2. *p.* 220.

* *De cult. Fœmin. lib.* 2. *c.* 5. *p.* 156. *vid. Constit. Ap. lib.* 1. *c.* 8. *p.* 823. *Cl. Alex. Pædag. lib.* 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 249. *De Discipl. & Hab. Virg. p.* 166.

Thirdly,

Part II. *Thirdly*, They mainly insisted upon this, that these Arts were *injurious to God*, and a *disparagement* to his *Workmanship*. We are not (says *Tertullian*) to seek after Neatness and Finery beyond what is simple and *sufficient*, and what *pleases* God, against whom they offend, who are not satisfied with his Workmanship; an Argument which he there prosecutes with great severity. St. *Cyprian* treads in his *Master's* Steps, and prosecutes the same Argument with a great deal of zeal and sharpness: Amongst other things he tells us, that these additional Arts are a bold and *sacrilegious* Attempt, and an high Contempt of God; that it is to reform what God has *form'd*, to alter and change his Work, and, as much as they can, to *disfigure* that Person, which God has *made after his own Image and Likeness:* that such a one has cause to fear, lest when the day of *Resurrection* comes, he that *made* them should not *know* them, nor receive them when they come for the promised Rewards. Accordingly he brings in the great *Censor* and *Judg* of the World thus speaking to such a Person: *This is none of my Workmanship, nor is this our Image and Likeness; thou hast defil'd thy Skin with false Compositions, chang'd thy Hair into an adulterous Colour, thy Face counterfeit, thy Shape corrupt, thy Countenance quite another thing; thou can'st not behold God, thine Eyes not being the same which God created, but which the evil Spirit has infected; thou hast imitated the fiery, sparkling, and glittering Eyes of the Serpent: of thine Enemy hast thou learnt to be over-trim and neat, and with him like to receive thy Portion.* And are not these *(says he)* things fit to be thought on by the Servants of God, and to be the daily Objects of their *care* and *fear?*

Histor. Religios. c. 9. in vit. Pet. p. 343. I cannot but in this place, set down a Passage which *Theodoret* reports of his own *Mother*; That in her younger Years having a Distemper in one of her Eyes, which

which had baffled all the Arts of *Physick*, she was at length persuaded to make her address to one *Peter*, famous for the Gift of *Miracles*; who lived near *Antioch* a very severe and ascetick Course of Life: And to render her self (as she thought) the more *considerable* in his Eye, she put on all her *Bravery*; her richest *Robes*, her *Pendents*, and Chains of *Pearl*, and whatever could render her *fine* and *splendid*. No sooner was she come to him, but the severe and *uncomplimental* Man at first sight bluntly entertained her with this Discourse: Tell me, *Daughter*, suppose an excellent *Artist* having drawn a Picture according to all the Laws and Rules of Art, should expose and hang it forth to View; and another rude and unskilful *Bungler* coming by, should find fault with this excellent Piece, and attempt to *amend* it, draw the *Eye-brows* to a greater length, make the Complection *whiter*, or add more *colour* to the Cheeks: would not the true Author be justly angry, that his Art was disparaged and undervalued, and *needless* Additions made to the Piece by an unskilful hand? And so 'tis here; Can we think that the great *Artificer* of the World, the *Maker* and *Former* of our Nature, is not, and that justly, angry, when you accuse his incomprehensible Wisdom and Perfection, of Unskilfulness, and want of Knowledg? For you would not add your *Reds*, *Whites*, or *Blacks*, did you not think your Bodies needed these Additions; and while you think so, you *condemn* your Creator for *Weakness* and *Ignorance:* But know, that he has *Power* answerable to his *Will*, and as the *Psalmist* tells us, *The Lord has done all things as he pleased:* And he that takes care of what is *good* for all, would not give what is *evil* and *hurtful* unto any. Corrupt not therefore the *Image* of God, nor attempt to *add*, what he in his infinite Wisdom thought not fit to *give:* Study not to invent this adulterate Beauty, which even

Chap. 3.

Part II. even to chaſte Perſons oft proves a cauſe of Ruin, by becoming a Snare to them that look upon it. The *holy Man* ſaid no more, and the *young Lady* preſently found her ſelf wounded with the force of his reaſonings, but would not leave him till ſhe had obtained the end of her Errand; which he granted, not without great importunity, and an humble and modeſt referring all to the *Grace of God*, and ſo ſent her home with a double Cure; her Body cured of its Diſtemper, and her Mind of its Pride and Vanity: and ſhe ever after lead a moſt humble, ſober, and pious Life.

But it were to tranſcribe whole Books, to tell you what the Fathers (theſe three that I have ſo often mentioned eſpecially) have ſaid in this Caſe, the Cauſe being not more copiouſly than *elegantly* managed by them; and thither I refer the capable Reader, who has any farther Curioſity for theſe things. The *true* Beauty of a Chriſtian in thoſe Days lay not in *external* and adventitious Ornaments, but in the *Goodneſs* and *Purity* of the Mind: The Beauty of the Body (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) conſiſts in a *good Complexion*, and in *apt Symmetry* and Proportion of its Parts; but the greateſt Beauty in the World is that of the *Soul*, when 'tis adorn'd with the *Holy Spirit*, and the excellent Graces of it, *Juſtice*, *Prudence*, *Fortitude*, *Temperance*, the *love of Goodneſs and Modeſty*; which is the brighteſt and moſt lovely Ornament that the Eye of Man can behold. It is not *(ſays he)* the exterior Aſpect of the Man that is to be regarded, but the Mind that is to be furniſhed and adorned with Goodneſs and Vertue: and therefore he wittily compares thoſe Women that *curiouſly* trick and trim up the Body, but neglect how 'tis with the Soul within, to the *Egyptian* Temples; look upon their *out-ſide*, and they are moſt *ſplendid* and *magnificent*, encompaſſed with delicate Groves, built with large Entries, and ſtately *Portico's*,

Pædag. lib. 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 248.

Ibid. c. 2. *p.* 216.

Portico's, ſurrounded with ſeveral Rows of *Pillars*, the Walls both within and without ſet off with *Stones* of ſeveral Countries curiouſly wrought and carved, the Temples themſelves garniſh'd with *Gold*, *Silver*, *Amber*, and all the glittering and *precious* Stone that *India* or *Ethiopia* can afford; but enter within them, and enquire for the *Deity* that is there worſhipped, and you ſhall be *gravely* ſhewed behind a Curtain a *Cat* or a *Crocodile*, or a *Serpent* of that Country, or ſome ſuch *ill-favoured* Beaſt, which is the *reſidentiary* or *tutelar* Deity of that place. And juſt ſuch *(ſays he)* do theſe Women ſeem to me, who trim themſelves with *Gold*, and are taken up with curling their Hair, painting their Faces, blacking their Eyes, colouring their Locks, and other undue Arts of Softneſs and Luxury, beautifying the *outward Rail and Fence*; but if a Man look within the Veil and Covering of the Temple, what is under all this Gayneſs and Finery, he ſhould be ſo far from meeting with what was truly beautiful, that it will excite his Horrour and Averſation: For he ſhall not find the *Image* of God dwelling there, as might reaſonably be expected; but inſtead thereof ſome *filthy* and treacherous *Beaſt*, that poſſeſſes the moſt inward Receſſes of the Soul, a *luſtful Ape*, or that *crafty Serpent* that devours the Underſtanding of a Man, and turns his Soul into a *Neſt* or *Den*, full of moſt deadly Venom, and the Poiſon of his Error and Deceit. Chap. 3.

I conclude this with the account which St. *Gregory* gives of his Siſter *Gorgonia*, That ſhe uſed no Gold to make her fine, no *yellow Hair*, ordered into Knots and Curls, nor any other tricks to make her Head a *Scene* and *Pageantry*; no looſe and *tranſparent* Garments, no *Luſtre* of Stones and Jewels enlightning the Air round about, and reflecting Splendor upon them that wear them; no Devices and Arts of Painting, no Affection of Beauty that may be eaſily bought, no *Nazian. in Laud. Gor. Or.* 11. *p.* 181.

Part II. counter-working God's Creation, diſhonouring, reproaching, covering his Workmanſhip with falſe and deceitful Colours, ſuffering a *ſpurious* and *ſuppoſitious* Beauty to ſteal away that natural Image which ought to be kept intire to God and the future State: All this was far from her, and though ſhe very well underſtood the ſeveral *Modes* and *Garbs* of *Bravery* amongſt Women, yet ſhe thought none ſo honourable as the manner of her Life, and that *inward* Brightneſs that was lodg'd in her Mind. The only *Redneſs* that pleaſed her, was that which was the Fruit of *Bluſhing* and *Modeſty*; no other *Whiteneſs* but what came through *Faſting* and *Abſtinence*, leaving *Fucus's* and *Paintings*, and *living Pictures*, and fading Beauty to thoſe that belong to Plays and *Theatres*, and to ſuch, for whom to *bluſh* and be *aſhamed* is a *Shame* and a *Diſgrace*. To which I add that of *Tertullian*, who after he had ſmartly condemned and confuted the Arts of unlawful Beauty, the Vanity of going in too curious, coſtly and exceſſive Dreſſes, concludes with this Counſel to the Women of his time, to clothe themſelves with the *Silks* of *Honeſty*, the *fine Veſtures of Piety*, *the Purple of Modeſty*; and being *thus beautified and adorned* (ſays he) *God himſelf will be your Lover*.

De cult. fœmin. lib. 2. c. 13. ad fin.

CHAP. IV.

Of their great Temperance and Abſtinence.

A vicious Curioſity about Meats and Drinks, a great Temptation. Severely forbidden by the Chriſtian Law. The antient Chriſtians curious

ous only of ſuch Diet as miniſtred to Health. Chap. 4.
They gratifie not Eaſe and Delicacy. The great Inconveniencies of Intemperance either in Meats or Drinks. Their chief Care about ſpiritual Food. For other things, content with any Proviſions, manifeſted in ſeveral Inſtances. An over-nice and ſuperſtitious Abſtinence from ſome kinds of Food, condemned. The Inſtance of Alcibiades *the Martyr, out of* Euſebius. *Chriſtians unjuſtly accuſed by the Heathens of Exceſs and Prodigality in their Feaſtings.* Thyeſtian *Suppers laid to their Charge. The Charge in both parts of it denied, and fully refuted by* Tertullian, *and other Chriſtian Apologiſts.*

AMongſt the many Temptations that beſiege the Life of Man, there is ſcarce any into which we are more eaſily betrayed than into a *vicious Curioſity* about Meats and Drinks, and the Exceſſes of an unruly Appetite; therefore it is, that the Chriſtian Religion does ſo frequently inculcate upon us the Precepts of *Sobriety* and **Temperance**; to be *temperate in all things, to watch and be ſober, to caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, to walk honeſtly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs, not in Exceſs of Wine, Revellings and Banquetings: to take heed that our Hearts be not at any time overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and that we be not as the Men of the old World, brutiſhly taken up with Eating and Drinking when the Flood came and ſwept all away.* The Law of Chriſt commands to *faſt often, to keep under the Body, and to make no proviſion for the Fleſh:* If Nature, regularly governed, be content with *little*, Religion will teach us to be content with leſs. Theſe Rules the firſt

Part. II. Christians exactly transcribed into their Lives, being the greatest Instances of real Abstinence and Mortification, which they both *practised* themselves, and *pressed* upon others: They knew very well that God had given Men a *Charter* of Freedom indifferently to use the Creatures, and to enjoy them in some degree, not only for *Necessity* but *Delight*; but yet were afraid to go so far as they might, or to do any thing that might look towards Excess, or argue an irregular and unsober Mind: they contented themselves with such Provisions as were conducive to *Health* and *Strength*, without any studied seeking after those that were more *luscious* and *delightful*. 'Tis very true what St. *Basil* observes, that by reason of Mens different *Ages* and Course of Life, their different *Tempers* and Constitutions of Body, and other Circumstances, no one fix'd and certain Rule can be prescribed in this case: But yet our Food and Diet ought for the main to be regulated by the general end of it, which is not wantonly to *please* the *Palate*, but to minister to *Health*, and to repair the Weakness and Decays of Nature. Many (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) like brute Beasts, *live* only that they may *eat*; but for us, we are commanded to *eat*, that we may *live:* For Food and Pleasure is not the *Work* and Design for which we live in the World, our Residence here being in order to an incorruptible Life; and therefore our Nourishment ought to be easy and simple, and such as is subservient to the two main Ends of *Life*, *Health and Strength*. We ought to chuse such Food (as *Justin Martyr* tells his Friends) not as may gratify our *Ease* and *Delicacy*, but make our Lives *useful* and *serviceable*; and if at any time overtaken with Want, we should quietly acquiesce in that State: and therefore a little after he smartly declaims against all Excess. Wine *(says he)* is neither to be drunk daily to *Excess*, nor

Reg. fus. disput. interrog. 19. *tom.* 2. *p.* 560.

Pædag. l. 2. *c* 1. *p.* 139.

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 506.

Ib. p. 51.

nor to be used as commonly as *Water*: Both indeed are God's *Creatures*; but *Water* necessary, *Wine* given only to help and relieve the Body; which [*immoderately taken*] chains up the *Tongue*, sparkles *Fire* out of the *Eyes*, makes the *Legs* tremble, and the Understanding being gone, readily takes off its Cup of deadly *Poison*: contrary to God's Ordination, it turns the peaceable *Instruments* of Husbandry into *Swords* and *Spears*. It may indeed be necessary, sparingly to drink Wine both Winter and Summer; but he that drinks it to *Excess*, as a Man that takes over-much of a Medicine, like a Dog or a Swine betrays his own Shame. But above all Men in the World, it least becomes us [*Christians*] as if we were Votaries to Luxury, to abuse the Creatures of God, and to make use of *Thirst*, as a pretence to Drunkenness, seeing we ought to drink no more than what will serve to *quench* our Thirst; not like those who swallowing down Wine, as Men do drink in a burning Fever, quickly make an end of themselves through their Intemperance. Nor are we less to take heed of *Gluttony*, contenting our selves with a *spare* Diet, and such only as is necessary; not giving way to the infinite and unsatisfied cravings of a nice and intemperate Appetite, which will have a thousand Pretences to defend it self; but ruling our selves according to the wise *Sentence* of him who said τροφῆς ἄρα χρηστέον ἵνα τὸ μὴ πεινῶν, *That we are to eat only to satisfy our Hunger.* Thus that antient Father. To this purpose also *Clemens Alexandrinus* discourses at large, representing the great Evils and Inconveniences of Gluttony and Excess; that it wastes the *Estate*, ruins the *Body* by impairing its Health, debauching the Stomach, deflowering its Taste, begetting an ill Habitude and Temper, and sowing it with the Seeds of all Diseases: it dulls the *Mind*, and renders it inept and sluggish, and prepares it for

Chap. 4.

Ut supr. *Cap.* 1, 2. *per tot.*

Part II. the Entertainment of any Vice or Wickedneſs: That although we are not abſolutely bound to abſtain from Variety of Meats, yet we are not to make them our Deſire or Study, eſpecially ſuch as ſavour of Niceneſs and Delicacy, and are apt to pamper and excite Luſt and Wantonneſs; for though 'tis true all things were eſpecially made for Man's ſake, yet it is not convenient to make uſe of all, and at ſometimes leſs than at others; to the advantageous uſe of a thing, reſpect being to be had, not only to the thing it ſelf, but to the *Time*, *Occaſion*, and *Manner* of it: That therefore our Meals for the main ſhould be *light* and *eaſy*, not mixed with *Variety* of Dainties, but ſuch as may prepare for *Faſting*, and the Exerciſes of Religion. Upon this account St. *Cyprian* in an Epiſtle, wherein he gives Directions about Prayer, adviſes them (and to make the Counſel more effectual, tells them, that he was *warned* of it by immediate *Revelation* from God) to eat and drink ſoberly and ſparingly, that outward Snares might not enfeeble that Heavenly Vigour and Sprightlineſs that was in their Breaſts, leſt their Minds being over-charged with too plentiful Meals, might be leſs *watchful unto Prayer*. The ſame Counſel St. *Hierom* gives to *Læta* about the Education of her Daughter, that her Diet ſhould be thin and mean, and that ſhe ſhould never eat more, than ſhe might ariſe with ſome *Appetite*, ſo as that after Meals ſhe might be preſently fit either to read or ſing *Pſalms*.

Ad Presb. & Diac. ep. 7. p. 18.

Ad Læt. tom. 1. p. 57.

Conc. Laod. Can. 53. When at any time invited to publick Solemnities, as *Marriages* and the like, the Prudence of the Church, thought fit to lay Reſtraints upon them, and not only to forbid them light and *ludicrous* Actions, as *leaping* or *dancing*, but that they ſhould *dine* and *ſup gravely* and *modeſtly*, as becomes Chriſtians.

Ib. p. 144. The chief care of Chriſtians then was to become Partakers τῆς ἄνω τροφῆς τῆς θείας, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*

drinus ſtiles it, of that *Divine Food that is from a-bove*, and that only is capable to give real ſatisfaction, little regarding what Proviſions they had (ſo they had but any) for that part that dwelt here below. When *Julian* the Emperor, to raiſe Mony for his Wars, began to ſqueeze and oppreſs the Chriſtians, he ſent amongſt others to St *Baſil* (who had formerly been his Fellow-ſtudent at *Athens*) for a thouſand Pounds; the Anſwer he ſends him was, that it could not be expected there, where he had not ſo much Proviſion before-hand as would ſerve for one day; that there was no Arts of *Cookery* at his Houſe, nor Knives *ſtained* with the Blood of ſlaughtered Proviſions; that his greateſt Dainties were a few *Pot-herbs*, a piece of Bread, and a little ſour *vapid* Wine: no ſuch Exceedings, as to ſtupify his Senſes with Fumes ariſing from a loaded Stomach, and to render them incapable to diſcharge their Functions through Intemperance and Exceſs. *Chryſoſtom* commends *Olympias* not more for the Modeſty of her Garb, than the Meanneſs and Sobriety of her Diet, to which ſhe had ſo uſed her ſelf, that ſhe had got the perfect Maſtery over all undue Appetites and Inclinations, and had not only *bridled* the Horſe, but *tamed* and reduced him into an entire Subjection, and taught her Stomach to receive only ſo much Meat and Drink as was enough to keep her alive, and in health. This indeed was the great End of their ſignal Abſtinence in thoſe days, that by ſubduing the *Fleſh* they might keep the ſtricter hand over the inordinate Motions of *corrupt Nature*. When *Celſus* accuſed the *Jews*, and in them obliquely the Chriſtians, for needleſly abſtaining from *Swines Fleſh*, and ſome other ſorts of Food, affirming this to be no ſuch great matter, when the *Pythagoreans* wholly abſtained from eating any *living Creature*, who yet were never thought the better, or the more *dear* to God for it: *Origen*

Chap. 4.

Baſil. Ep. 208. *tom.* 3. *p.* 225. *confer. Socrat. lib.* 3. *c.* 13. *p.* 185.

Ep. 2. *ad Olymp. tom.* 4. *p.* 616.

Orig. cont. Celſ. l. 5. *p.* 259, 264.

Part II. anſwers, that whatever reaſon the *Jews* did it for (God having appointed the difference) this concerned not *Chriſtians*; that 'tis not *what enters in at the Mouth that defiles the Man, nor does Meat commend us to God*, nor do we think this Abſtinence any ſuch great matter; nor yet do we ſo indulge the Belly, as to affect or purſue ſuch Delights; that there's a vaſt difference between *us* and the *Pythagoreans* in this Affair; they indeed abſtain upon the account of their abſurd and fabulous Doctrine of the Soul's *Tranſmigration*, or paſſing out of one Body into another; and ſo forbear to kill or eat any living Creature, leſt happily they may deſtroy and devour their own *Friends* or *Children*: but we in all our Abſtinence do it only *to keep under the Body, and to bring it into Subjection*, endeavouring *to mortify the Deeds of the Body, to expel and extinguiſh our Members that are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, and every evil Concupiſcence and Deſire*. Where he fully vindicates the Chriſtians in their Abſtemiouſneſs and Temperance, from doing it out of any vain and fooliſh Affectation, any nice and ſingular Opinion, any baſe and ſordid, moroſe or unſociable Temper: They were careful to keep the *Mean*, and to avoid *Sordidneſs* as well as *Luxury*; nor did they profeſs themſelves Enemies to the Proviſion of human Life, any further than as they were inconſiſtent with the ends of Sobriety and Religion: as may appear from a *memorable* Paſſage related by *Euſebius*, out of the Letter of the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vien*, in *France*, to thoſe in *Aſia*. *Alcibiades* (one of thoſe who ſhortly after ſuffered Martyrdom) had accuſtomed himſelf to a very rigid and ſordid kind of Life, rejecting all other ſorts of Food except only *Bread* and *Water*; and this he did both before and after he was in Priſon, which it ſeems had an ill Influence upon others: whereupon *Attalus*,

Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 5. c. 3. p. 167.

talus, one of the most eminent of those famous Martyrs, the day after his being first exposed in the *Amphitheatre*, had it *revealed* to him (*For as yet*, says the Historian, *the Divine Grace had not withdrawn it self, but they had the Holy Spirit as their immediate Counsellor to instruct them*; which by the way may give countenance to those frequent *Visions*, and *Divine Condescensions* which *Cyprian* speaks of in his Epistles: To this *Attalus* it was *revealed*) that *Alcibiades* did amiss in refusing to use the *Creatures* of God, and thereby giving a Scandal, and an Offence to others: upon which he laid aside his *Singularity*, and with all Thankfulness to God promiscuosly ate any kind of Food. Chap. 4.

From the whole of what has been said, it's very evident, what little reason the Heathens had to accuse the Christians (in their *Agapæ*, or Love-feasts, especially) of *Excess* and *Prodigality*; for that they did, *Tertullian* expresly affirms: Our *little Suppers* (*says he*) besides as being guilty of other Wickedness, they traduce as *prodigal*, saying of us as *Diogenes* did of the People of *Megara*, that they *supped* as if they meant to *die* to morrow. Nay, what were infinitely horrid and barbarous, they commonly charged them with *Thyestian* Suppers, and eating Man's Flesh. To the first part of the Charge, concerning their Prodigality, *Tertullian* answers, That they could easilier *see a Mote in another's Eye, than a Beam in their own*; if they looked home, they would find that 'twas their own *Tribes* and *Precincts*, wherein the very Air was corrupted with the unsavoury *Fumes* of their loaded Tables, and over-charged Stomachs; and yet all this was passed by, and only the poor Christians *Triclinium* called in question: That if they had any Feast, it was a *Love-feast*, and whatever cost was laid out upon it, was expended not for *vain Glory*, but upon the acconnts of *Piety* and Religion; not to

Apol. c. 39. p. 32.

Athenag. legat. pro Christian. p. 37.

Ibid.

Part II. to nouriſh *Paraſites* and Flatterers, but to refreſh the *Poor:* That the *Order* of the Feaſt was as *ſober* and regular as the *Cauſe* was honeſt, going no further than Modeſty would admit: They *prayed* to God before they ventured upon his Creatures, eat but what ſufficed Hunger, drank no more than conſiſted with ſober and modeſt Men; and fed ſo, as remembring they were to riſe *at night* to worſhip God. When they had done, they ſung *Pſalms*, either of their own *Compoſure*, or out of the *Holy Volumes*; and as they *begun*, ſo they ended the Feaſt with Prayer, and then departed with the ſame care to preſerve their Modeſty and Chaſtity: ſo that they appeared not ſo much to have *feaſted* at Supper, as to have *fed* upon Diſcipline and Order. *So he.* For the other part of the Charge, their feeding upon *Man's Fleſh* at this common Supper, 'twas a Suggeſtion ſo *ſavage* and *barbarous*, as could have found belief with nothing but the very Spirit of Malice; we ſhall again meet with this objection in another place, and ſhall therefore here only note out of their *Apologiſt*, that it was a Charge, never offered to be made *good* againſt them, nor proved in any of thoſe many thouſand Trials which the Chriſtians had had in all parts of the Empire; that it was very unlikely they ſhould be guilty of eating *Human* Fleſh, who did not think it lawful to be preſent at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where Men were *ſlain*, or ſo much as to *taſte* any *Blood* at all. So *Biblias* the Martyr told her Enemies, when being reproached with this in the midſt of her Torments, ſhe cried out, *How is it poſſible that we ſhould devour* Infants, *as you charge us, who think it not lawful ſo much as to taſte the Blood of any Creature?* For even till then, and a long time after, they obſerved that *Canon* of the *Apoſtolick* Council, *To abſtain from things ſtrangled and from Blood.* So far were they from being either *barbarous* or *luxurious!* No, our Feaſts

Athenag. 3. *Ibid. p.* 38.

Euſeb. hiſt. Eccl. ubi ſupr. p. 158. *Cap.* 1.

Chap. 4.

Feasts (as he says in *Minutius Fælix*) are not only *chaste*, but *sober*; we indulge not our selves in Banquets, nor make our Feasts with Wine, but temper our Chearfulness with Gravity and Seriousness. And indeed their often Watchings and Fastings, and their constant Observance of the strictest parts of Devotion, sufficiently shewed how little they pampered or indulged the *Flesh*, the *Signs* whereof they every where carried in their very *Faces*; and this was so notorious, that their very Enemies reproached them with their *trembling* Joints, and their *pale* ghastly Looks. And *Lucian* giving an account of the *Christian* Assembly, into which he tells us *Critias* was brought to be made a *Proselyte*, describes them to be *a Company of Persons with their Heads hanging down and pale Faces*; which certainly did not arise from their fear of Suffering, (for no Men in the World were ever so *willing*, nay, so desirous of laying down their Lives as they) but from their frequent *Abstinence* and *Fasting*. To which purpose St. *Basil*'s Comment is most apposite; where commending *Temperance*, or (as he calls it) *Continence*, using the word in its largest Sense; Other Vertues (says he) being mainly exercised in *secret*, are not altogether so *visible* to the Eyes of Men: Whereas Continence, where-ever it is, will at first sight betray it self. For as a good Complexion, and an excellent Constitution of Body, peculiarly design a Man to be an *Athletes*, or Champion; so Leanness of Body, and that *Paleness* which is the fruit of Continence, evidence a Christian to be a real *Champion* for the Commands of *Christ*, vanquishing his Enemy in the weakness of his Body, and shews how able he is to *contend* in the Cause of Piety and Vertue. The very sight of such a Man must needs be of great advantage to affect us, to behold him sparingly and moderately using even those things that are necessary, not paying Nature its *Tribute*, without

Min. Fæl. p. 26.

Pallidi, trepidi. Apud eundem, p. 10.

Philopatr. tom. 2. p. 1007.

Reg. suf. disp. interrog. 17. p. 559.

Part II. out ſome Regret, begrudging the little time that he ſpends about it, and therefore making haſte to get from the Table to return to his better Exerciſes and Imployments.

CHAP. V.

Of their Singular Continence and Chaſtity.

Their admirable Continence diſcovered in ſeveral particulars. Their Abſtinence from Marriage. Their Marrying only to comply with the end of the Inſtitution. Seldom married more than once. Their Continence admired by Heathens. The Fathers generally ſevere againſt ſecond Marriages. The moderate Judgment of Clemens Alexandrinus *in the caſe. The Canons of ſeveral Councils concerning it. Three ſorts of Digamy or ſecond Marriages. Their ſhunning all occaſions and appearances of Lightneſs and Immodeſty, abſtaining from Publick Meetings, Feaſts, Plays, &c.* Conſtantine's *Law, that no Widow ſhould be forced to appear at publick Tribunals. Another of* Theodoſius, *that none ſhould marry within twelve compleat Months after her Huſband's Deceaſe. The promiſcuous Uſe of Baths forbidden both by Canon and Civil Laws. Unmarried Perſons, eſpecially of Eccleſiaſtick Relation, not familiarly to converſe together.* Mulieres Συνείσακτοι, *who. How brought in. Condemned by the Council of* Antioch, *and that of* Nice. *Clandeſtine Marriages diſallowed. Their abhorring all immodeſt Pictures and Diſ-*

Discourses. The great Modesty of Gorgonia. *Their valuing Chastity above Life; submitting to any kind of Death rather than violate it; many chusing to kill themselves rather than be deflowered. Several Instances of it. Impurity in Christians bewailed as a great Scandal; punished by the Church with very severe Penalties. Several Passages out of the Fathers and Councils noted to that purpose. Christians accused by the Heathens of Incest and Adultery. The Sum of the Charge. Their Answer. The Heathens very unfit to bring in this Charge, being themselves so notoriously guilty; whole Nations, their wisest Philosophers, their very Gods themselves: This fully proved against them. The very Gentiles tacitly confessed the Christians innocent, by condemning them to be forcibly prostituted. A part of their Religion not to give way to wanton Looks or unchaste Desires. The eminent Prevalency of Christianity in converting Persons from Uncleanness and Debauchery, pleaded and asserted. The Original of the Accusation enquired into. Found to arise from the beastly Practices of the Gnosticks, &c. who though guilty of the most notorious Villanies, and of these in particular, yet shrowded themselves under the general Name of Christians. Some forced through fear to confess the Christians guilty of these Crimes.* Chap. 5.

A Third considerable Instance of that Sobriety and Moderation for which the Christians were so renowned of old, was their **Continence**, in abstaining from all manner of Uncleanness; which is that Vertue

Part II. Vertue that we properly call *Chaſtity*: a Vertue for which how eminent they were, (notwithſtanding what their Enemies heavily charged upon them to the contrary, of which afterwards) we ſhall take notice of in ſome few particulars.

Firſt, The Chriſtians of thoſe Times were ſo far from breaking in upon any *unchaſte* Embraces, that they frequently abſtained even from *lawful* Pleaſures, and kept themſelves even from the *honourable* and *undefiled* Bed, never marrying all their Life. We are (ſays *Octavius*) *chaſte* in our *Speech*, and *chaſter* in our *Bodies*; and very many of us, though we do not boaſt on't, do inviolably preſerve a *perpetual* Virginity; and are ſo far from any extravagant Deſire after *inceſtuous* Mixtures, that many ſtand at a diſtance from the moſt *chaſte* and modeſt Embraces. Thus *Juſtin Martyr* tells the Emperors, that amongſt the *Chriſtians* there were a great many of either Sex, who had from their Childhood been educated in the Chriſtian Diſcipline, who for ſixty or ſeventy Years had kept themſelves *ſingle* and uncorrupt; and he wiſhed the like could be ſhewn in all other ſorts of Men. To the ſame purpoſe another *Apologiſt*: 'Tis very eaſy (ſays he) to find many amongſt us both Men and Women, who remain unmarried even in *old Age*; conceiving that in this ſtate they ſhall have fitter Opportunities of drawing near to God. Not that they who perſevered in this courſe of *Celibate*, did combine themſelves into diſtinct Societies, and bind themſelves under an *Oath* of *perpetual* Virginity, (as the Humour was in after-ages; for of this not the leaſt Shadow appears in any of the Writings of thoſe times: they lived promiſcuouſly till towards the end of the third *Century*, applied themſelves to the Buſineſs of their Place and Station, and only lived ſingle, that in thoſe troubleſome and hazardous Times of Perſecution, they might be leſs enſnared with the

Min. Fæl. p. 26.

Ap. 2. p 62.

Athenag. leg. pro Chriſtian. p. 37.

the Entanglements of the World, and be more free for the Exercises of Religion. Chap. 5.

Secondly, When they did marry, they generally professed they did it only to comply with the great End of the *Institution*, *viz.* The Propagation of Mankind; not to gratify wanton and brutish Desires, but to answer the great *End* of Nature, that Human Society might not fail: Either (say they) we marry not at all, but keep our selves *always* continent; or if we do marry, it is for no other End but the bringing forth and the bringing up of Children. Whoever amongst us takes a Wife according to the Laws prescribed us, he reckons he does it only for the begetting of Children: Within this his Desires are bounded and limited; as the Husbandman concerns himself no further in Tilling his Ground, and Sowing of his Corn, than to bring forth the Crop at Harvest. Hence it was, that they seldom married more than *once*: We willingly contain our selves (as he speaks in *M. Felix*) within the bounds of single Marriage, and either know but *one* Woman, (and that meerly out of a desire of Children) or *none*. The first Knot being loosed by Death, they very rarely tied a second: Which gained great Honour and Reputation both to them and to their Religion with the *Gentiles* amongst whom they lived. *Chrysostom* tells us, That a Discourse happening on a time between him and his Master, who was a *Gentile*, concerning his *Mother*, being told that she was a Widow, and after enquiry concerning her Age, being answered that she was forty Years old, and that she had lived twenty Years of the time a Widow; the Man was surprized with a strange Admiration, and cried out before all the Company, *Behold* (said he) *what brave Women there are amongst the Christians!* The truth is, such was the Heavenly Zeal and Temper of the first Ages of Christianity, that they would have no more to do with the World than

Just. Mart. ib. 71. *Athenag. ibid.*

Ubi supra.

Ad vid. junior. tom. 4. *p.* 458.

Part II. than they needs muſt, but induſtriouſly ſhunned all its Burdens and Encumbrances, amongſt which they eſpecially reckoned Marriage, a State not raſhly to be engaged in; for once it was *allowable*, but for a ſecond time *inexcuſable*. And indeed it cannot be denied but that many of the antient Fathers, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Hierom*, and others, did inveigh againſt *ſecond Marriages* with too much Bitterneſs and Severity, violently preſſing many Paſſages in Scripture to ſerve the Cauſe, ſtraining the String many times till it cracked again; and not ſticking to cenſure and condemn ſecond Marriages, as little better than *Adultery*. Hear what one of the *Apologiſts* ſays to it: Amongſt us every Man either remains as he was born, or engages himſelf in one only Marriage: For as for ſecond Marriages, they are but a more plauſible and *decorous* kind of Adultery; our Lord aſſuring us, That *whoever puts away his Wife, and takes another, commits Adultery*. Which place, as alſo another of like Importance, how perverſly he interprets, and impertinently applies to his purpoſe, I am not willing to remember. *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſpeaks in the Caſe with much more *Modeſty* and Moderation: As for thoſe to whom God has given the Gift of *abſolute* Continence, we think them happy; we admire the Gravity and Stayedneſs of thoſe that content themſelves with a ſingle Marriage: but yet ſay withal, that Compaſſion ought to be had of others, and that we *ſhould bear one another's Burdens*, leſt he who *ſeems to ſtand fair do fall himſelf*. And as for Second Marriages, that of the Apoſtle is to take place, *if they cannot contain, they ſhould marry*; *for it is better to marry than to burn*. However, 'tis certain, the Fathers of old generally did what they could to diſcourage ſecond Marriages. The antient *Canons* (as *Zonaras* tells us) ſuſpended ſuch Perſons from the Communion for a whole Year; and the Council of *Laodicea*, though it determine

Athenag. ut ſupra.

Strom. l. 3. p. 428. vid. Epiph. Hær. 48. p. 178. Cyril. ad illum. Catech. 4. p. 90.

De Can. 7. Conc. Neo. Cæſar. Can. 1.

mine not the Time, yet it requires that they should spend some small time at least in *Penance*, in Fasting and Prayer, before they be received to the Communion. By the *Canons* that are call'd *Apostolical*, whoever, after Baptism, has engag'd in a second Marriage, is rendred incapable of any Degree in the Ministry. Accordingly *Epiphanius* reports of one *Joseph*, whom he knew, a converted *Jew*, and advanced to the Dignity of a *Count* by *Constantine* the Great; that when the *Arians* would have laid hands upon him to have made him Bishop, he got off by this wile, by pretending himself to have been twice married. But though the Fathers and antient Councils were thus severe in this Case, yet the Rigour of their Censure will be much abated, if what some tell us be true, That many of their Passages are not levell'd against successive Marriages, but against having two Wives at the same time. For, as a learned Man hath observed, there were three sorts of *Digamy*; the first a Man's having two Wives *at once*: this was condemned by the *Roman* Laws. The second, when the former Wife being dead, the Man married a *second time*. A Third, when for any slight Cause a Man *put away* his Wife by a Bill of *Divorce*, and married another; which though then frequently practis'd and conniv'd at (if not allowed) by the Laws of those Times, was yet prohibited by the Decrees of the Church: and of this last sort (says he) many of the antient Canons are to be understood.

Chap. 5.

Can. 17.

Hæres. 30. *p.* 61.

Justell. not. in Can. 1. *Conc. Laod.*

Thirdly, They were infinitely careful to shun all *occasions* and appearances of Lightness and Immodesty, whatever might tend to inveigle their Senses, and to debauch their Minds and Manners; nay, whatever might but give a suspicion of Wantonness and Incontinence. They declined as much as might be, going to all publick Meetings; such as Feasts, Plays, Shews, *&c.* Therefore *Cyprian* severely chides

Part II.

some *Virgins* for being present at *Weddings*, where they laughed freely, could not but hear loose Discourses, see uncomely Carriages, feed upon luxurious Dishes; all which must needs not only *kindle*, but add *Fuel* to the *Fire*, and fill their Minds with indecent Thoughts and Desires. St. *Hierom*, on the other hand, does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on *Festival*-days, to avoid the Croud and Gazes of the People; and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the Publick, without the greatest Care and Custody of themselves. For this reason *Constantine* made a Law, That *Matrons* should not be forc'd upon the account of Debt, to come out of their own Houses, to appear before the publick *Tribunals*; but that the business should be decided in such way, as might not betray the Modesty of that Sex. And when afterwards the Fervor of Christianity began to abate apace, and Persons had in a great measure lost that huge Reverence which former Times had for Continence and Chastity; *Theodosius*, to restrain them a little within the bounds of Decency, provided a Law, That *no Woman*, of what Quality or Rank soever, should *marry* again within a Year at least, (*i. e.* within twelve *full* Months, whereas under the old *Roman* Laws, the time of Mourning was but Ten, as a Learned *Interpreter* of that Law observes) after her Husband's Death: and this he ratified by a double Penalty; a Note of perpetual *Infamy* to be set upon the offending Person, and the Loss of her whole *Dower*, and whatever Estate her Husband had bequeathed her; which was to go to the Children she had by him, or (if none) to his next of Kin. By the *Laodicean* Council, not only Clergymen, and such as have entred upon a State of Continency, but all Christian Men whatsoever, are forbidden to use the same *common Baths* with Women.

De Discipl. & Hab. Virg. p. 167.

De Virg. servand. p. 71. *tom.* 1.

Cod. Theod. l. 1. *tit.* 10. *l.* 1.

Ib. l. 3. *tit.* 8. *l.* 1. *Vide Gothofred. in loc.*

Can. 30. *Vid. Conc. in Trull. Can.* 77.

Women: And for very good reason, it being a thing (as *Zonaras* observes) both *shameful* and uncomely in it self, and pernicious in its consequence: For how easily does an unlawful *Flame* kindle from such a *Spark?* And when Human Nature is of it self so ready to *boil* over, who would pour *Oil* upon the *Fire?* A thing ever look'd upon as repugnant to all the Laws of Modesty, yea, even by them that *are without:* this being (says the *Council)* one of the chiefest things which the very Heathen *condemn*, and for which they censure and reproach us. Parallel to this, *Photius*, and his Commentator *Balsamon*, tell us of a Law of the Emperor *Justinian*, making it a sufficient Cause of *Divorce*, and losing her *Dowry*, for a Woman either to *feast* or *bathe* in the Company of other Men, without the leave and consent of her Husband. Indeed in the first and purer Times, they took all imaginable care that unmarried Persons, especially such as were of *Ecclesiastical* Cognizance, or had devoted themselves to a severer Course of Piety, should not commonly converse together. *Cyprian* writing to *Pomponius* about the Virgins that had taken Profession of Continence upon them, but lived too familiarly with some Persons that belonged unto the Church, charges him, that Men and Virgins should not only not *sleep* near one another, but not dwell together in the same House; lest the Infirmity of their Sex, and the Slipperiness of their Youth should betray them into *the Snare of the Devil.* Wherefore he commends *Pomponius* for having suspended the *Deacon*, and the rest that had kept such familiar Correspondence with those Virgins; and ordered that they should not be absolved till they had sufficiently testified their Repentance, and made it appear by satisfactory Evidence, that no unlawful Familiarity had passed between them; and that if ever they re-

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Nomocan. πτλ. δ. κεφ. λά. p. 104.

Ep. 62. *p.* 98. *videsis Conc.* 1. *Carthag. Can.* 3, 4.

Part II. turned to the like Cohabitation, greater Penalties ſhould be inflicted upon them. The Foundation of which ill Cuſtom doubtleſs ſprung, or at leaſt took Encouragement from hence: In thoſe firſt Times of Chriſtianity it was uſual for *Clergymen*, ſuch eſpecially as were ſent up and down to preach the Goſpel, to have ſome grave and ſober *Woman* along with them; who might be helpful and aſſiſting to them, and who was neither *Wife* nor *Concubine*, but taken in either upon the account of neceſſary *Attendance*, or the pretence of *Piety*. Theſe Women in the Writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them) are called Συνείσακτοι, ſuch as were brought in, taken into the Houſe as *Domeſtick* Aſſiſtants to *Eccleſiaſtick* Perſons. But this proving matter of Scandal and Inconvenience, was not only cried out againſt by *private* Fathers, but by *publick* Synods. The Council of *Antioch* held in the Reign of *Aurelian* the Emperor, *Anno* 272. in a *Synodical* Epiſtle, wherein they cenſure the Doctrines and Practices of *Paulus Samoſatenus*; condemn this among the reſt, that he and his *Presbyters* and *Deacons* keep theſe *introduced Women*, whereby horrible inconveniencies did ariſe: for beſides the Snare and Temptation of it, although they ſhould keep themſelves innocent, yet they could not avoid the Suſpicion and Scandal that would ariſe, and the Danger of drawing in others by their bad Example. For which reaſon St. *Baſil* writes to an old *Presbyter* in his Dioceſs, to abſtain from the Company of a Woman, with whom he was wont to *cohabit*; not ſo much to avoid Temptation to Incontinence (the Man being then ſeventy Years of Age) as that he may not lay a Stumbling-ſtone, and occaſion of *Offence* in his Brother's way. The ſame was univerſally forbidden by the great Council of *Nice*, and no Man within the Clergy allowed to have any Woman near him,

Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 7. c. 30. p. 281.

Epiſt. ad. Paregor. Presbyt. ep. 198. t. 216.

Can. 3. ubi. vid. Zonar.

him, unleſs his *Mother*, his *Siſter*, or his *Aunt*, or ſuch only, of whom there could be no *Suſpicion*; as we find it in the third *Canon* of that Council: in the antient Verſion whereof theſe *mulieres* Συνεισακτοι, are ſtiled *Extraneæ*, *Strangers*; by which name they are alſo called in a Law of the Emperor *Honorius*, prohibiting any Clergyman whatſoever, to keep Company with theſe *ſtrange Women*; limiting their Converſe and Co-habitation within the very ſame Relations to which they are reſtrained by the *Nicene Canon*, which 'tis not to be doubted that the Emperor had in his eye when he made that *Conſtitution*. And becauſe *Biſhops* were the higheſt Order in the Church, therefore that their Honour might be eſpecially ſecured, care was taken, that no Biſhop, under Penalty of being *depoſed*, ſhould entertain, or co-habit with any *Woman* whatſoever, either Relation or Stranger, that ſo all Pretence either of Temptation or Scandal, might be cut off. For the ſame reaſon it was, that they diſallowed all *Clandeſtine* Marriages which were not openly made in the face of the Church, accounting them no better than a State of *Adultery* or *Fornication*. And as they were careful not to give Offence to others, ſo they were not willing themſelves to come within the ſhadow of a Temptation: they ſtood at a diſtance from whatever was offenſive either to their *Eyes* or *Ears*; their *Ears* they ſtopt againſt all looſe idle Songs, all filthy and obſcene Diſcourſes; their *Eyes* they ſhut againſt all uncomely Objects, all wanton and laſcivious Pictures, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* expreſly tells us, not doing any thing that ſeemed but to carry an ill colour with it. *Nazianzen* tells us of his Siſter *Gorgonia*, a vertuous Woman, whoſe Example we have often quoted, That for Modeſty and Sobriety ſhe went beyond all other Women; that ſhe reconciled the two oppoſite States of Human Life, *Celibate* and *Marriage*; the one more

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C. Th. lib. 16. Tit. 2. de Epiſc. l. 44.

Synopſ. Baſil. lib. Tit. 1. c. 41. p. 22.

Tertull. de pudicit. c. 4. p. 557.

Admonit. ad Græc. p. 40. vid. Conc. 6. in Trull. Can. 100. Orat. 11. p. 180.

Part II. *ſublime* and *divine*, but more *dangerous* and *troubleſome*; the other more *humble*, but withal more *ſafe*: that ſhe avoided the Inconveniencies of each, and choſe what was moſt excellent out of both, the *Sublimity* of the one, and the *Security* of the other; ſhewing, that neither of theſe States, in it ſelf, did wholly tie us up either to God or the World, nor yet wholly ſeparate us from them; ſo that the one ſhould be abſolutely rejected, or the other abſolutely commended and embrac'd; but that it is the *Mind* that admirably preſides both over Marriage and Virginity. And withal, further adds concerning her, That ſo great was her *Baſhfulneſs* and Modeſty, that when ſhe lay under a moſt acute and dangerous Diſtemper, yet ſhe refuſed to have any *Phyſician* come near her; as bluſhing that any Man ſhould either *ſee* or touch her.

Ib. p. 185.

Fourthly, They valued their Innocency and their Honour above their *Lives*, and therefore choſe to undergo the greateſt Dangers; to *die*, yea, to *kill* themſelves rather than any Violence ſhould be offered to their Chaſtity. As the faireſt Promiſes could not *tempt* them, ſo neither could the fierceſt Torments *affright* them into any unchaſte Compliance. When *Maximinus*, the *Emperor*, governed in the *Eaſtern* parts, amongſt other Effects of his wild and brutiſh Fury and Extravagance, he fill'd all Places where he came with Adulteries and Raviſhments, abuſing Women and deflouring Virgins: which ſucceeded well enough (ſays the *Hiſtorian*) with all others, except only *Chriſtians*, who generouſly deſpiſing Death, made light of the Rage and Fury of the Tyrant. The Men underwent all ſorts of Puniſhments which Cruelty could invent; the Women bore up with a Courage, no leſs *manly* and unconquerable: and when any were drawn out to be abuſed, they rather ſubmitted their Lives to Death, than

Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 8. *c.* 14. *p.* 312.

than their Bodies to *Dishonour*. Of these he tells us of one especially at *Alexandria*, a Woman of great Birth and Fortune, but much more famous for her Vertues, especially her Modesty and Chastity; which she stoutly defended, and preferred before her Nobility, or her Riches, her excellent Parts, or any Accomplishments whatsoever. The Emperor had oft attempted her by all Arts of Sollicitation; but all in vain, till at last, not being able to prevail, his Affection somewhat attempering his Fierceness and Cruelty, he would not put her to Death, which she was most ready to have undergone; but spoil'd her of her Estate, and then sent her into Banishment: there being many hundreds of others at the same time, who not able to bear the Violation of their Chastity, wherewith the Governors and Commanders threatned them, willingly subjected themselves to all kinds of Racks and Tortures, and the worst *capital* Punishments which their Enemies could inflict upon them. Nay, when the Case so happen'd that they were set upon, and all their Resoluteness could not provoke the cruel Kindness of their Enemies to dispatch them, they would rather dispatch *themselves*, than fall into the rude hands of Lust and Wantonness. Thus did that famous *Woman*, and her two Daughters, (mentioned by the same Author, whose Names, as *Chrysostom* in an *Oration* on purpose in their Commendation tells us, were *Domnina* the Mother, *Beynice* and *Prosdoce* the Daughters) eminent as well for the outward Beauty and *Features* of their Bodies, as for the inward *Vertues* of their Minds, being sought for as a Prey to Lust, under the *Diocletian* Persecution, they fled for it; but being found out by the Soldiers that were sent to search for them, and knowing there was no other way to escape; in their return, they begg'd leave of the Soldiers, that for some private occa-

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Ib. c. 12. p. 305. *Hom.* 51. *de S.S. Domn. Ber. Prosd. tom.* 1. *p.* 557.

Part. II. sions they might step a little out of the Road: which being granted, fitting themselves for what they had before-hand agreed on, as well as the time would give them leave, they unanimously threw themselves into the River, and there perished in the *Waters*. The like he relates of a noble *Woman* at *Rome*, Wife to the *Prefect*, or chief Governor of the City, (but a Christian) that *Maxentius* the Emperor being passionately inflam'd with the Love of her, sent Officers to fetch her, who breaking into the House, to the great Terror of her Husband, would violently have seiz'd on her; of whom she begg'd only so much time as that she might a little dress and adorn her self: under which pretence, retiring into her Chamber, she caught up a Sword, and by a fatal Stroke, left the Messengers nothing but a dismal Spectacle of Amazement and Horror. These Instances (both of them highly applauded by *Chrysostom* and *Eusebius*) I quote not to justify a Man's laying violent hands upon himself, as either lawful or laudable: whether in some such cases, Persons might not be acted by some *divine* Motions, extraordinary and *heroick* Impulses (the Case of *Sampson*, *&c.*) as St. *Augustine* inclines to believe, it is not very pertinent for me to enquire; it being enough to my purpose to observe, that they were great Evidences how highly they priz'd *Chastity* and *Integrity*, which they were willing to secure at so dear a rate.

Ibid. c.14. p. 313.

De Civ. D. lib.1. c.26. Col.75. ubi de hac ipsa re agit.

And in those cases wherein Life was not concern'd, they gave the greatest Testimony how much they abhorred all Uncleanness. None were ever more hearty Enemies to *Idolatry*; and yet *Origen* at *Alexandria* (if that Story be true) when put to this unhappy choice, either to *sacrifice* or *defile* himself, chose rather to commit Idolatry than Fornication. Though even that too was rather his *Enemies* act than his *own*, they thrusting the Frankincense into his hand, and haling him up to the *Altar*.

Epiphan. Hæres. 64. p. 228.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Whenever any was found guilty of the least Uncleanness, it was looked upon and *bewailed* as a very *heinous* Sin, and a great *Dishonour* to the Christian Name: What is it that I hear! (says *Cyprian*) how detestable should it be to you, what with the greatest Grief and Affliction of my Mind I have understood, that there are some amongst you who have defiled their *Bodies*, the *Temples of God*, even after they were *sanctified* by Confession, and *cleansed* by Baptism, with filthy and infamous Embraces, promiscuously using the Beds and Lodgings of the Women? When although they should be free from *actual* Adultery, yet even in this 'twould be a *Fault* of a mighty Aggravation, that by their *scandalous* Example others might be seduced into Ruin. St. *Basil*, writing to a *Monk* who had been *overtaken* with this *Fault*, elegantly bewails the Greatness of his Sin, as a Dishonour to the Strictness of his former Profession; a Reproach to those Lips, which had *kissed* the Mouths of so many *Saints*; to those Hands, which so many devout Persons had *embraced* as pure and undefiled; to those Knees, before which so many Servants of God had *fallen down*; as a being caught in the Snare of a crafty *Devil*, a perfidious Violation of his *Promises*, a being become a *Sport* and Scorn to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, a confuting (what in him lay) that triumphant Speech of *Christ*, that he had *overcome the World*, filling even to the place where he lived a Cup of *Infamy* and *Reproach*. In the next Epistle he deals with the *Woman*, and treats her with the same elegant Severity, though in both, he so aggravates the case, as to excite them to Repentance, and to a speedy *Recovery of themselves out of the Snare of the Devil*. But because good Words and Persuasions were not *Cords*, strong enough to restrain some Mens irregular Lusts and Passions, they twisted with them the *Discipline* of the Church: And therefore,

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Ad Rogat. & Confess. Ep. 6. p. 15.

Ad Monach. laps. tom. 1. p. 11.

Sixthly,

Part II. *Sixthly*, They were wont to *punish* the Breach of Chastity by inflicting severe Penalties upon incontinent Persons. Amongst all the Sins that were most sharply punished in the antient Church, *Adultery* was one of the chief: whosoever was convicted of it was immediately cast out of the Church, and disowned as a rotten Member. This, *Tertullian* tells us, first made *Marcion* turn *Heretick*; for being found guilty of lying with a Virgin, and for that thrown out of the Communion of the Church, he betook himself to one *Cerdon*, a *Master-Heretick*, and espoused his Doctrines and Opinions. The truth is, in those first Times the Punishment of Adultery was very great, *perpetual* Penance all a Man's Life, and scarce being admitted into Communion at the very *Hour of Death*, till *Pope Zephyrinus*, about the year *two hundred and sixteen*, considering the great Inconveniences of so much Severity, Persons hereby being oft *driven* into *Despair*, and others discouraged from coming over to the Christian Faith, ordered, That Penance in this case should be limited to a shorter time; which being ended, such Persons might be received again into the Bosom of the *Church*. This *Decree* gave great Offence to the *African* Churches, most whereof stood up for the Strictness of the *antient* Discipline. *Tertullian* more especially inveighs against it with much Bitterness and Animosity, as a thing *unfit* in it self, and an *Innovation* in the Church. The same, *Cyprian* also plainly intimates, though he himself was for the more *mild* Opinion. By the *Ancyran* Council, held *Anno* three hundred and fifteen, it was decreed, That whoever was guilty of Adultery, should be punished with a *seven years* Penance before they were admitted to the Communion. By the Synod of *Illiberis*, if a Man after having done his Penance for the first Fault, fell afterwards into the same Sin again, he was not to be taken into Com-

Vid. Tert. de Pudicit. c. 7. p. 560. de Hæres. p. 120.

Lib. de Pudicit. c. 1. p. 555.

Ad Antonian. Ep. 52. p. 71, 72.

Can. 20.

Can. 7 p. 13.

Communion, no, *not* at the Hour of Death. The same Punishment they inflicted upon *Bawds*, and such Persons as for Gain prostituted the Bodies of their *Children*, by selling them (or themselves rather, of whom their Children were a part) to Lust and Ruin. St. *Basil*, writing to *Amphilochius* Rules for the Conduct of Discipline, and the Measures of Repentance, sets Adultery at *fifteen years* Penance, Fornication at *seven*, and then to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. His Brother *Gregory*, Bishop of *Nyssa*, treating about the same Affairs, appoints Fornication to be punished with no less than *nine years* Penance, and Suspension from the Sacrament; and Adultery, and all other Species of Uncleanness, with double that time: though allowing a Liberty to the *Spiritual Guide* to contract this time, as the Circumstances of the *Case* or *Person* might require. But both these last mentioned being but private Bishops, their *Canons* could be no further obligatory, than to those particular *Dioceses*, that were under their Charge. And indeed the Censures of the Church in this case did much vary according to Time and Place, in some more *rigid* and severe, in others more *lax* and favourable; tho in all, such as did abundantly shew what hearty Enemies they were to all Filthiness and Impurity whatsoever.

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Can. 12. *p.* 22.

Epist. Can. 58, 59. *tom.* 3. *p.* 36.

Ep. Canon. ad Letoi. Can. 4. *tom.* 1. *p.* 951.

What has been hitherto said of the Modesty, the chaste and sober Carriage of the Primitive Christians, will receive further Light, if we consider how clearly they vindicated themselves from that *malicious* Charge of *Incest* and *Adultery*, which the Heathens commonly charged upon them; so commonly, that we scarce find any of the antient *Apologists* but takes notice of it, and confutes it. The Sum of the Charge, as 'tis more formally drawn up by the Heathen in *M. Felix*, take thus: That the Christians knew one another by certain *privy* Marks and Signs, and were

Pag. 7, &c.

Part II. were wont to be in *love* with, almoſt before they *knew* one another; that they exerciſed Luſt and Filthineſs under a pretence of Religion, promiſcuouſly calling themſelves *Brothers* and *Siſters*, that by the help of ſo *ſacred* a Name, their common Adulteries might become *inceſtuous*: That upon a ſolemn Day, they meet together at a Feaſt [*he means their Love-feaſts*] with their *Wives*, *Children*, *Siſters*, *Mothers*, Perſons of every *Age* and *Sex*; where after they have well eaten and drunk, and begun to be *warm* and merry, heated with the Exceſs of Wine, a piece of *Meat* is thrown for the *Dogs*, who being tied to the *Candleſticks*, begin to leap and friſk about, till they have run away with, and put out the *Lights*; and then nothing being left but Darkneſs, the fit *Cover* and Shadow for Impudence and Villany, they promiſcuouſly run amongſt one another into filthy and inceſtuous Embraces; and if they be not *all alike* guilty of Inceſt, 'tis not the fault of their *Will*, but the good Fortune of their *Chance*, ſeeing what *actually* happens to one, is *intentionally* the Lot of all. This is the Tale, which however abſurd and incredible, yet ſtrangely found *Belief*, or at leaſt was pretended to be believed amongſt the Enemies of *Chriſtianity*. Now, though it be ſufficiently refuted by what has been already ſaid, yet we may obſerve the Chriſtians of thoſe Times further pleading theſe *Four* things in their own Vindication.

Firſt, That if the Charge had been true, yet the *Heathens* had little reaſon to object it to the *Chriſtians*, being *themſelves* ſo notoriouſly guilty in this kind. For Adultery, nothing more common amongſt them; and for Inceſt, 'twas a general Indictment of *whole* Nations, the *Perſians* uſually lying with their own *Mothers*, the *Macedonians* and *Egyptians* marrying with their own *Siſters*, and this done even at *Athens* it ſelf; their Hiſtories full of them, their

Tert. Apol. c. 9. p. 10. c. 39. p. 31. Min. Fœl. p. 26.

Plays

Plays and Tragedies, which they frequented every Day with great Applauſe, repreſented them as *lawful* and *commendable*. *Socrates* himſelf, the great Glory of the Heathen World, was condemned at *Athens*, amongſt other things, for *Sodomy*, and the Corruption of Youth; and ſome of *Plato*'s School have periſhed in the very *Act* of Adultery. Nay, their very Gods themſelves, whom they worſhipped and adored, were highly guilty in this kind. They feign thoſe things of us (ſays *Athenagoras*) which they themſelves report of their own Gods; whoſe Luſts and Wantonneſſes 'tis no wonder if they ſtile *Myſteries*: Were they ſuch hearty Enemies to ſhameful and promiſcuous Mixtures, they muſt abhor their great God *Jupiter*, who begot Children both of *Rhea* the *Mother*, and *Proſerpina* the *Daughter*, and married with his own *Siſter*. And who was (unleſs *Orpheus* their great *Poet* lyes) more wicked and vile in this kind, than *Thyeſtes* himſelf? *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells them, That as they had ordered the matter, by the *Marriages*, begetting *Children*, *Adulteries*, and *Banquets* of their *Gods* (which they ſet out in their *Plays* and *Poems*) they had turned Heaven into a *Comick Scene*, and made the *Deity* a piece of *Dramatick* Sport, and by Satyrick Wit had jeſted *Religion*, and whatever was moſt *Sacred*, into *Scorn* and *Laughter*. Nothing more uſual amongſt them (as he there *obſerves*) than to hang their Rooms with the *Pictures* of their Gods drawn in the moſt laſcivious and *propudious* Poſtures, engaged in the moſt filthy and diſhoneſt Actions, enough to ſhame Intemperance it ſelf. *Theſe* (ſays he) *are the original Patterns of your ſoft Effeminacy; this your beaſtly and ſhameful Divinity; theſe the Doctrines of your Gods, Copartners with you in your Uncleanneſs and Adultery.* And whereas they might pretend, that theſe Stories of their Gods were only the extravagant Inventions

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Tert. ib. c. 46. p. 36.

Legat. pro Chriſtian. p. 35.

Admonit. ad Græc. p. 39, 40. Videſis Jul. Firm. de Err. Proſ. Relig. p. 8.

tions

Part II. tions of their *Poets*, who took a Liberty to say any thing to gratify the People; *Athanasius* answers, That hereby they shook the very *Foundation* of their *Gods*, having no other Authority for their *Existence*, than what Account their *Poets* gave them: so that if they feigned their *Actions*, they might with equal Reason be supposed to feign their very *Names* and *Persons*; there being the same ground of Belief for the one as for the other: and that there was as much reason to believe they spake truth in this, as in the relation of any other matters of Fact, concerning *Achilles*, *Ulysses*, *Nestor*, *Hector*, or any of the rest; all depending upon the same Warrant and Authority. This propagated Looseness and Uncleanness to them, under the notion and shadow of Religion; such as the *Gods* are, such warrantably may be their *Worshippers*. Wherever you are (says *Tertullian*) at home, or abroad, or beyond the Seas, *Lust* is your Companion, which often stumbles upon *Incest*: Whereas Chastity diligently and faithfully preserved, keeps us from any such Event, and we are as far from *Incest*, as we are from *Whoredom*, or any Excess in a married State; yea, many prevent all possibility of this Charge, by containing themselves within perpetual Virginity. And yet though we are thus (says another *Apologist*) yet there want not those who object these things to us; and, as 'tis in the Proverb, ἡ πόρνη τὴν σώφρονα, *The Strumpet reproaches the honest Woman*: for though they *merchandize* for Lust, and keep open Shop for all manner of Uncleanness, not abstaining from the Violation and Abuse of *Youth*, Males with Males *committing that which is unseemly*; though themselves are guilty of these Villanies, which they report also of their *Gods*, and do themselves boast of them as brave *Atchievements*; yet have they the face to accuse us of them. *Adulterers* and *Sodomites* as they are, they charge us, who are either

Orat. contr. Gent. p. 14. tom. 1.

Ibid. c. 9. p. 10.

Athenag. ut supr. p. 37.

either always continent, or never marry more than once; themselves in the mean while living like *Fishes*, *where the great ones subdue and swallow up the less.* Such infamous Filthinesses are done amongst you, which we do not care to *hear*, and may much less defend; you laying things to the Charge of chaste and modest Men, which we could not believe that there should be such things done in the World, were not you your selves *Instances* of them. This Consideration made *Justin Martyr* thus freely and passionately bespeak the *Senate:* It were to be wished that some body getting up into a *high* place, should with a *loud* voice cry out, *Be afraid, be afraid to charge those things of which you your selves are openly guilty, upon the Innocent and Undeserving; to attribute what belongs only to your selves and to your Gods, to those with whom there is not so much as the Shadow of any such thing to be found. Learn to be more wise and sober, and repent of such Injustice.*

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M. Fæl. p. 24. B.

Ap. 1. *p.* 51.

Secondly, That the Heathens themselves did tacitly *confess* Christians to be *innocent* in this case, when their great care was how they might *debauch* them: 'Twas a part of their severest Punishment to be *prostituted*, and exposed to Rudeness and Violence; a Penalty which they would never have inflicted upon them, had they really been such *leud* profligate Persons as their Enemies endeavoured to represent them. This Plea *Tertullian* urges in the Close of his *Apology:* Condemn, (says he) crucify and torment us; your *Cruelty* and Injustice is the Evidence of our *Innocency*, and therefore God suffers it to come upon us: For while you chuse rather to condemn a *Woman* that is a *Christian* to the *Stews* than to the *Lions*, you plainly confess, that the Violation of Chastity is accounted by us a *heavier* Penalty, than any Punishment or kind of Death which you can inflict npon us.

C. ult. p. 40.

Ad Lenonem quàm ad Leonem.

An

Part II.

An eminent Instance hereof (though of the other Sex) St. *Hierom* relates to this purpose: In the time of the *Decian* Persecution, a young Man, a *Christian*, then in the Flower and Beauty of his Age, whose Constancy had been oft attempted by other means to no purpose, he was at last set upon in this manner; he was carried into a pleasant *Garden*, and into a part of it beset with *Lillies* and *Roses* hard by the Banks of a *Crystal River*, whose soft *Murmurs* together with the *Musick* made by the Leaves of the Trees, waven by the gentle Motions of the Wind, conspired to render it a place for *Pleasure* and *Delight*: here upon a *Bed of Down* the young Man was laid; and that he might not be able to help himself, or shift his Posture, was tied down with *silken* Cords. The Company withdrawing, a beautiful *Strumpet* was sent into him, who began to caress him with Kisses and Embraces, treating him with all the Arts of Wantonness, not consistent with *Modesty* to name. How to relieve himself in this case, the poor Man knew not; but finding the Temptation beginning to prevail, he presently bit off his *Tongue*, and *spit* it in her Face as she attempted to *kiss* him, by the Greatness of his Pain extinguishing those *sensual* Titillations which her wicked Artifices began to kindle in him.

Vit. Pauli Eremit. tom. 1. *p.* 237.

Thirdly, They confidently assured them, That amongst *Christians* it was not only unlawful to be *actually* unclean, *but to look after a Woman with wanton and unchaste Desires.* Our Lord (says *Justin Martyr*) has told us, That whosoever *looks* after a Woman to *lust* after her, has already committed *Adultery* with her in his *Heart*; and that *if our right Eye offend us, we must pluck it out:* As therefore human Laws condemn two Wives, so by the Laws of our *Master*, they are Sinners who look upon a Woman with unfit Desires after her; for not only he that

Ap. 2. *p.* 61, 62.

that really commits Adultery is rejected by him, but even he that has a *mind* to it; not only our *Actions*, but our very Thoughts being open unto God. So *Athenagoras:* So far are we from any promiscuous Embraces, that we are not permitted the Freedom of an unchaste Look; for, *whoever* (says our Lord) *looks after a Woman to desire her, has play'd the Adulterer with her in his Heart.* Chap. 5. *Ut supra.* p. 36.

We are not therefore allowed to use our Eyes to any other purposes, than those for which God created them, *viz.* to be *Lights* to the Body. To abuse them to Wantonness, is to be guilty of Adultery; forasmuch as they know they were made for other Ends, and cannot but be conscious to themselves of their own Thoughts: and how is it possible for Men under such *Limitations* to be otherwise than chaste and sober? For we have not to deal with *Human* Laws, under which a Man may be wicked, and yet escape; but our Discipline was deliver'd by God himself: we have a Law, which makes our *selves* the *Rule* and Measure of *Righteousness* towards others. According therefore to the difference of Age we account some as *Sons* and *Daughters*, others as *Brethren* and *Sisters*, the more aged we honour in the place of *Parents*; those therefore whom we account as *Sisters*, or as allied to us in any other Relation, we reckon it a matter of great Concernment that they should be chaste and incorrupt.

Fourthly, They pleaded, that this Objection would easily vanish, if they would but consider what a strange *Change* and Alteration was in this very case wrought upon Persons at their first *Conversion* to Christianity; immediately becoming quite of another Spirit and Temper from what they were before. We who before-time (says *Justin Martyr*, speaking of the converting Power of the *Christian* Doctrine) did please our selves in *Fornications* and Uncleanness, *Ap.* 2. *p.* 61, 62.

Part II. ness, do now solely embrace Temperance and Chastity: What an innumerable Company could I name of those who have left their Luxury and Intemperance, and come over to this kind of Life! for *Christ came not to call the Chaste and Righteous*, [they needed it not] *but the Wicked, the Incontinent and the Unrighteous, to Repentance.* And in his other *Apology*, he gives an Instance of a Woman, who having, together with her Husband, lived a very *vicious* and debauched Course of Life, after her Conversion to Christianity, became strictly chaste and sober; and not content with this, she urged her Husband also to do the like, laying before him the Doctrines of Christianity, and persuading him both by the Rewards and Punishments of another World: But he obstinately refusing, it begot a quarrel between them, which still ripen'd into a wider Breach, till it became matter of publick Cognizance, and was an occasion for *Justin Martyr* to write that excellent *Apology* for the Christians. Upon this account *Tertullian* justly condemns the Madness of the Heathens, and their unreasonable Prejudice against Christianity, that they would hate their nearest Relations meerly for being *Christians*, though they saw how much they were every ways *bettered* by it in their Lives and Manners: the Father *dis-inheriting* his Son, of whom now he had *no* cause left to complain, but that he was a *Christian*; the Master *imprisoning* his Servant, though now he had found him useful and necessary to him. But (what's more especially to the purpose) he tells us of some Husbands he knew, who though before so infinitely *jealous* of their Wives (and possibly not without reason) that a *Mouse* could not stir in the Room, but it must be a *Gallant* creeping to their Bed; yet when upon their turning Christians they became so eminently reserved, chaste and modest, that there was not the least foun-

Ap. 1. *p.* 41.

Ad Nation. l. 1. *c.* 4. *p.* 43.

foundation for Suspicion, their *Jealousy* was converted into *Hatred*, and they vow'd they had rather their Wives should be *Strumpets* than *Christians*: So obstinately (says he) do Men stand in their own *Light*, and contend against those Advantages which they might reap by Christianity. This Argument from the powerful and successful Influence of the Christian Faith, *Origen* frequently makes use of: They must needs (says he) confess the Excellency and *Divinity* of Christ's Doctrine; whoever do but look into the *Lives* of those that adhere to it, comparing their former Course of Life with that which they now lead; and considering in what Impurities, Lusts and Wickednesses, every one of them wallowed before they embraced this Doctrine: But since that they entertained it, how much more grave, moderate, and constant are they become? Insomuch that some of them out of a desire of a more *transcendent* Purity, and that they may worship God with a chaste Mind, deny themselves even the Pleasures of a *lawful* Bed. The same he affirms elsewhere, that those whom the Gentiles scorn'd as the most rude and sottish Persons, being once initiated into the Faith and Discipline of the Holy *Jesus*, were so far from Lasciviousness, Filthiness, and all manner of Uncleanness, that (like *Priests* wholly devoted to God) they altogether abstain even from allowed Embraces; that there was no need for them (as some of the best among the *Gentiles* have done) to use Arts and *Medicines* to keep them chaste; nor *Guardians* set over them to preserve their Virginity; the Word of God being sufficient to expel and drive out all irregular Appetites and Desires. This also *Tertullian* observes, as the incomparable Excellency of the Christian Doctrine above that of the best Philosophers, that whenas *Democritus* was forced to put out his Eyes, because not able to defend him-

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Adv. Cels. l. 1. *p.* 21.

Lib. 7. *p.* 365.

Ap. c. 46. *p.* 36.

Part II. ſelf from the Charms of Beauty; a Chriſtian could *look* upon a Woman with chaſte unſeduced Eyes, being at the ſame time inwardly *blind* as to any Temptation from his Luſt. With ſuch a mighty Force did the Goſpel come and captivate Mens Hearts into the Obedience of the Truth. Thence *Lactantius* makes this triumphant Challenge, where diſcourſing of the Prevalency which the Commands of God had upon the Minds of Men, as daily Experience did demonſtrate: *Give me* (ſays he) *a Man that is angry, furious, and paſſionate; and with a few Words from God, I will render him as meek and quiet as a Lamb: Give me one that is luſtful, filthy, and vicious, and you ſhall ſee him ſober, chaſte and continent.* The ſame he inſtances in moſt other Vices: *So great* (ſays he) *is the Power of the Divine Wiſdom, that being infuſed into the Breaſt of a Man, it will ſoon expel that Folly which is the grand Parent of all Vice and Wickedneſs.*

Lib. 3. de falſ. ſapient. c. 26. p. 321.

The Innocency of Chriſtians ſtanding thus clear from this *wicked* Imputation, it may not be amiſs, before we conclude, to enquire a little into the *Riſe* and Original of this abſurd and malicious Charge. *Origen* fathers it upon the *Jews*, as if they had falſly and ſpitefully invented it (as they did other things) to diſgrace and prejudice Chriſtianity, and he tells us, that in ſome meaſure it ſucceeded accordingly, keeping many at a diſtance from the Chriſtian Religion; and that even in his time there were ſome who for this very reaſon would have no *Diſcourſe* or *Commerce* with a *Chriſtian*. But though both *Jew* and *Gentile* had Malice and Spite enough againſt the *Chriſtians*, yet I can hardly think that it was a *purely invented* Falſhood; but that it had ſome ground of pretence, though ill applied, and ſo we ſhall find it had: for which we are to know, that in the moſt early times of Chriſtianity, there were ſeveral

Contr. Celſ. l. 60. p. 293, 294.

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several sorts of *Hereticks* (who though they had their particular Names, yet all called themselves Christians, accounting that hereby they *graced* and honoured their Party, as *Epiphanius* tells us) the Followers of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Marcion*, *Marcus*, *Basilides*, &c. who all went under the general Name of *Gnosticks*, and were under the pretence of Religion guilty of the most prodigious Villanies, and particularly those we are speaking of. *Irenæus* reports of them, that they gave up themselves to all Filthiness and Bestiality, not only privately *corrupting* the Women whom they had inveigled into their Sect (as some of them, returning after to the Church, *confessed* with Shame and Sorrow) but openly and with bare face *marrying* the Women whom they had *seduced* from their Husbands; committing the most execrable Wickednesses, and *laughing* at the Pious and *Orthodox* Christians whom the *Fear of God* restrained from Sin either in Word or Thought, as a Company of *ignorant* and *silly* Fellows; magnifying themselves, stiling themselves *Perfect*, *and the Seeds of Election*. And much more in other places to the same purpose, where he gives account of the profane and hellish Rites of their Assemblies. Of the *Carpocratians*, another Gang of those *brutish* Hereticks, *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates the same, both as to their Doctrines and Practices, reporting the matter almost in the very same Circumstances wherein it is charged upon the Christians by the Heathen in *Min. Felix*, *viz.* That both Men and Women used to meet at *Supper* (which they had in imitation of the true *Christian* ἀγάπη, or *Love-Feast*) where after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful Meal, to prevent all Shame (if they had any remained) they put out the *Lights*, and then promiscuously mixed in Filthiness with one another, or else each sorting as they pleased. And of the

Hæres. 29. *p.* 58.

Adv. Hæres. lib. 1. *c.* 1. *p.* 28. *vid. etiam c.* 9. *p.* 70, *&c.* 32. *p.* 132.

Strom. l. 3. *p.* 430.

Part II. the *Gnoſticks*, *Epiphanius* tells us, That they had their Wives in *common*, and if any Stranger of their Party came to them, both Men and Women had this Mark and Sign to know one another by; ſtretching out their *Hands* by way of Salutation, they uſed to *tickle* each other in the *ball* of the Hand, by which they were ſatisfied that the Stranger really was of their Gang and Party. Amongſt their Brethren the *Carpocratians*, they were wont to mark their Diſciples and Proſelytes under the *right Ear* with a Brand, a Slit, or a Hole, that they might the more readily diſcern them; (this agrees exactly with the Charge of the Heathens, that they *knew* one another at the firſt *ſight* by privy Marks and Signs) and having thus owned and received each other, they went to their luxurious Feaſts, and to thoſe horrid Brutiſhneſſes that followed after.

Hær. 26. *p.* 42.

Ib. Hær. 27. *p.* 51.

Now this being the caſe with theſe abominable Wretches, who yet had the face to call themſelves *Chriſtians*, it is no wonder if *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who were greedy of any occaſion to beſpatter and reproach *Chriſtians*, and rather than not find an occaſion, would *make* one, charged it upon all Chriſtians; either not knowing it to be otherwiſe, or if they did, not willing to diſtinguiſh between true and falſe. And that this was the true and only Riſe and Ground of the Charge, beſides ſome Intimations of it in *Juſtin Martyr*, we have it expreſly aſſerted by *Euſebius*, as that which gave being to that abſurd and impious Opinion, which ſpread ſo faſt among the Heathens, of the Chriſtians being guilty of promiſcuous Mixtures, to the great Reproach and Infamy of the *Chriſtian* Name. I do not deny but this malicious Report might receive Strength and *Encouragement* from the Servants of ſome Chriſtians, who being racked by the Heathens, might confeſs what they put into their Mouths, and this Charge amongſt the

Ap. 2. *p.* 56, 60. *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 4. *c.* 7. *p.* 120.

the reſt. This the ſame *Hiſtorian* relates out of the Letters of the Churches in *France*: Certain *Gentiles*, who were Servants to ſome Chriſtians, being apprehended, and having ſeen the exquiſite Torments which the Chriſtians were put to, for fear of the like, did at the *inſtance* of the Soldiers, who urged them to it, confeſs, That the Chriſtians had amongſt them *inceſtuous* Mixtures, and Suppers furniſhed with *Man's* Fleſh; laying ſuch things to their Charge as they held unlawful to *ſpeak* or *think* of, or could *believe* were ever done by Men: Which being once divulged, they every where fell upon the Chriſtians with the greateſt Rage and Fierceneſs. So in the Perſecution under *Maximinus*, one of the Commanders that then reſided at *Damaſcus* laid hold of a few light inconſiderable *Women* in the Market, and threatning them with the Rack, forced the Wretches publickly to confeſs that they had formerly been Chriſtians, and that they knew all their *Villanies*, that in their Religious Meetings they committed the moſt beaſtly Actions; and indeed whatever elſe he would have them ſay, that might diſgrace Chriſtianity. This *Confeſſion* of theirs he cauſed to be entred into the publick *Records*, and then tranſmitted it to the *Emperor*, by whoſe Command it was immediately publiſhed in all Cities and Places of the Empire: So induſtriouſly did the Malice of Men and Devils bend all the *Nerves* of their Power and Subtilty (though in vain) either wholly to *ſuppreſs*, or at leaſt to *diſhearten* and baffle out the Chriſtians! Which brings me to the Conſideration of another Vertue no leſs remarkable in the *Chriſtians* of thoſe Times.

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Lib. 5. *c.* 1. *p.* 156.

Id. l. c. 5. *p.* 350.

CHAP. VI.

Of their Readineſs and Conſtancy in Profeſſing their Religion.

Their Courage and Undauntedneſs in profeſſing the Truth, though reproached and perſecuted. Their open and reſolute owning it to the face of their Enemies, and in defiance of the greateſt Dangers. The Story of Victorinus *the Rhetorician converted by* Simplician. *The free and impartial Anſwers of* Maris *to* Julian, *of* Baſil *to the* Arian *Governor.* Polycarp's *refuſing to fly, when Officers were ſent to apprehend him. His reſolute Carriage before the Proconſul. The like of* Cyprian. *No Torments could make them deny Chriſt. Women unconquerable. The excellent Inſtance of* Blandina *and others. Divers voluntarily offering themſelves. Others offering to plead the Cauſe of the Chriſtians, though with the immediate hazard of their Lives. This Boldneſs and Reſolution noted as an Argument of the Excellency of their Religion, and the Goodneſs of their Cauſe above that of the beſt Philoſophers.* Ariſtotle's *flying for fear of ſuffering for his Opinions. The cowardly Silence of* Jamblichus's *Scholars. This Reſolution of theirs confeſſed by Heathens,* Pliny, Apollo's *Oracle in the caſe of* Porphyry's *Wife,* Galen, *&c. The Conſtancy of Chriſtians to their Religion, Proverbial.*

WHEN

WHEN our Blessed Saviour sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the Difficulties that were like to attend their Message; but withal, bad them arm themselves with **Constancy** and Resolution, and not to regard the Scoffs and Reproaches, the Miseries and Sufferings that might fall upon them; *not to fear them that could only kill the Body*, but to make a free and bold *Confession* of his Name before the World, and chearfully to *take up their Cross and follow him*. And St. *Paul*, though himself then in Chains at *Rome*, exhorts the Christians to *stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrified by their Adversaries; it being given them on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake:* which made it very necessary for them to have their *Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace*. And certainly, if ever true Courage and Greatness of Mind appeared in any Persons in the World, it was in the *Christians of those Times*, who with such a generous and unterrified Mind defied Dangers and Torments, owned and gloried in the Profession of Christianity against all the Threats, Reproaches, and Persecutions, which the worst of their Adversaries could make against them. We shall first see what account their Apologists give of it even before their Enemies, and then how they made it good in their Lives and Actions.

Justin Martyr speaking of the successful Propagation of the Gospel, immediately upon *Christ's* Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven; The Apostles of Christ (says he) going forth from *Jerusalem*, preached the powerful Word in every place; although it were *Capital* either to *preach* or to *profess* the Name of *Christ*, which yet we do every where embrace *Ap.* 2. *p.* 38.

Part II. embrace and teach; which if you (as Enemies) ſtill go on to obſtruct, the worſt you can do is but to *kill* us, whereby you will do us no great harm, but will purchaſe to your ſelves, and to all thoſe that unjuſtly perſecute us, and perſiſt impenitent in their Proceedings, the *Vengeance* of Eternal Flames. And

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 226. when *Trypho* the *Jew* had charged *Chriſtianity* for an idle Story, and the *Chriſtians* for no better than *Fools* to quit all the Conveniencies of this Life upon the account of it; the *Martyr* anſwers, That this proceeded from his Ignorance, and an implicit Aſſent to the abſurd and malicious Inſinuations of their *Rabbins*, who underſtood very little of the *Scriptures:* that would he but admit the true Reaſons of Chriſtianity, he would quickly underſtand how far they were from being in an Error, and how little reaſon they had to quit their Profeſſion; although Men did ſufficiently ſcorn and reproach them for it, and the Powers of the World endeavour to force them to

Ib. p. 223. *D.* renounce and forſake it: Notwithſtanding all which, they choſe rather to die, and chearfully underwent it; being fully aſſured, that what *God* had *promiſed*

Ib. p. 337. through *Chriſt*, he would infallibly make good to them. And diſcourſing afterwards of the ſame matter, As for us *(ſays he)* that have entertained the Religion of the Holy *Jeſus*, your ſelves know very well, there is none throughout the World that is able to *ſubdue* or *affright* us out of our Profeſſion; nothing being plainer, than that though our Heads be expoſed to *Swords* and *Axes*, our Bodies faſtned to the *Croſs*, though thrown to *wild Beaſts*, harraſſed out with *Chains*, *Fire*, and all other Inſtruments of *Torment*, yet do we not ſtart from our Profeſſion: Nay, the more theſe things happen to us, the faſter others flock over to the Name of *Jeſus*, and become pious and devout Followers of Chriſt; it being with us in this caſe as with a *Vine*, which being *pruned* and

and *trimmed*, and its luxurious Excreſcences pared off, brings forth more fruitful and flouriſhing Branches. How little he valued any danger in competition with the Truth, he tells his Adverſary he might know by this, that he would not ſtifle and conceal it, although they ſhould immediately tear him in pieces for it: and therefore when he ſaw his Countrymen the *Samaritans* ſeduced by the Impoſtures of *Simon Magus*, whom they held to be a *God above all Principality and Power*, he could not but by an Addreſs make his Complaint to *Cæſar*, not regarding the Hazards and Troubles that might enſue upon it. *Tertullian* giving the Heathens an account of that Chriſt whom they worſhipped, tells them they might well believe it to be true, for that no Man might *lye* for his Religion; to diſſemble in this caſe, being to *deny* a thing, which could not be charged upon the *Chriſtians*, who owned and ſtood to it with their laſt drop of Blood. *We ſpeak it* (ſays he) *and we ſpeak it* openly, *yea, while you are tearing our Fleſh, and* ſhedding *our Blood, we cry aloud, that we worſhip God through* Chriſt. So fully were they ſatisfied in the Truth of their Religion, as to be ready rather a thouſand times to *die*, than to *deny* it.

Chap. 6.

Ib. p. 339.

Ap. 21. *p.* 21.

Nor were theſe merely *big Words* with which the Chriſtians vapoured in the ſight of their Enemies; we ſhall find that they made them good by *acting* ſuitable to theſe Profeſſions and Proteſtations. They did not then think it enough to eſpouſe the Faith of *Chriſt*, unleſs they publickly teſtified it to the World; whereof this Inſtance amongſt others: *Victorinus*, a *Rhetorician* of *Rome*, a Man of ſo great Note and Fame, that he had obtained the Honour of a Publick *Statue*, but a zealous Defender of *Paganiſm* and *Idolatry*, had read the Holy Scriptures, by which being convinced, he came to *Simplician*, and privately told him, that he was a *Chriſtian*; which the other refuſed

Aug. Conf. l. 8. *c.* 2. *tom.* 1. *col.* 136, 137.

Part II. fused to believe, unless he saw him testify it in the publick Church: to which *Victorinus* returned with a little Scorn, *What are they then the Walls that make a Christian?* This Answer he as oft returned as the other urged a publick Confession, for he was not willing to disoblige his great Friends who he knew would fall foul upon him; till by Reading and Meditation he gathered Courage, and fearing that *Christ* would deny him before the *Holy Angels*, if he should refuse to confess him before Men, he became sensible of his Fault, and was ashamed of his Vanity and Folly, and calling to *Simplician*, *Let us go* (said he) *into the Church, I will now become a Christian:* which when he had done, and had been thorowly instructed in the Faith of *Christ*, he offered himself to Baptism; and being to make the accustomed *Confession* of his Faith, the Ministers of the Church offered him the liberty of doing it in a more *private* way, (as they were wont to do for those who were of a fearful and bashful Temper) which he utterly refused, and openly made it before all the People; affirming it to be unreasonable, that he should be ashamed to confess his *Hopes* of Salvation *before the People*, who while he taught *Rhetorick* (wherein he hoped for no such Reward) had publickly professed it every day. An Action that begat great wonder in *Rome*, as it was no less matter of rejoicing to the Church: no Dangers could then sway good Men from doing of their Duty. *Cyprian* highly commends *Cornelius* for taking the Bishoprick of *Rome* upon him in so dangerous a time; for the Greatness of his Mind, and the unshaken Firmness of his Faith, and the undaunted Managery of his Place, at a time when *Decius* the Tyrant threatned such heavy Severities to the Ministers of Christianity, and would sooner endure a *Corrival* in the Empire, than a Bishop to sit at *Rome*. How freely, how impartially did they speak their Minds,

Ad Antonian. Epist. 52. *p.* 68.

Minds, even to the Faces of their bittereſt Enemies? When *Maris*, Biſhop of *Chalcedon*, a Man blind with Age, met *Julian* the Emperor, he boldly charged him with his *Atheiſm* and *Apoſtacy* from the Chriſtian Faith: *Julian* reproached him with his *Blindneſs*, and told him his *Galilean* God would never cure him. To which the good old Man preſently anſwered, *I thank my God who has taken away my Sight, that I might not behold the Face of one that has lapſed into ſo great Impiety.* Chap. 6. *Socr. Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 3. *c.* 12. *p.* 183.

Were they at any time attempted by Arts of *Flattery* and Enticement, the Charms would not take place upon them. So when *Julian*, both by himſelf and the Officers of his Army, ſet upon the Soldiers, and by fair Promiſes of Preferments and Rewards, ſought to fetch them off from Chriſtianity, though he prevailed upon ſome few weak and inſtable Minds, yet the far greateſt part ſtood off; yea, by many even of the *meaneſt* and moſt inconſiderable Quality, his *Temptations* were as reſolutely beaten back, as the *Blow* of an Engine is by a Wall of *Marble*. Nor were there any more ſhaken by Storms and Threatnings. When *Modeſtus* the Governor under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor could not by any means bring over St. *Baſil* to the Party, he threatned him with Severity: Doſt thou not *fear* this Power that I have? Why ſhould I fear? ſaid *Baſil:* what can'ſt thou *do*, or what can I *ſuffer?* The other anſwered, the Loſs of thy *Eſtate*, *Baniſhment*, *Torment*, and *Death*. But threaten us with ſomething elſe if thou can'ſt (ſaid *Baſil*) for none of theſe things can reach us: Confiſcation of *Eſtate* cannot hurt him that has nothing to loſe, unleſs thou wanteſt theſe *tattered* and thred-bare Garments, and a few *Books*, wherein all my Eſtate lies: nor can I be properly *baniſhed*, who am not tied to any place; wherever I am 'twill be my Country, *the wohle Earth*

Naz. Orat. in Jul. 1. *p.* 75.

Id. in laud. Baſil. Orat. 20. *p.* 349, 350.

Part II. *Earth is God's*, in which I am but a *Pilgrim* and a Stranger. I fear no *Torments*, my Body not being able to hold out beyond the firſt Stroke; and for *Death*, it will be a *Kindneſs* to me: for it will but ſo much the ſooner ſend me unto *God*, for whoſe ſake I live, and am indeed in a great meaſure already dead, towards which I have been a long time haſtning. And there is no reaſon to wonder at this *Freedom* of Speech; in other things we are meek and yielding, but when the *Cauſe of God* and Religion is concerned, over-looking all other things, we direct our Thoughts only unto him: and then *Fire* and *Sword*, *wild Beaſts* and *Engines* to tear off our Fleſh, are ſo far from being a *Terror*, that they are rather a *Pleaſure* and *Recreation* to us. Reproach and threaten, and uſe your Power to the utmoſt, yea let the Emperor know, that you ſhall never be able to make us aſſent to your *wicked* Doctrine; no, though you ſhould threaten ten thouſand times worſe than all this. The Governor was ſtrangely ſurprized with the Spirit and Reſolution of the Man, and went and told the Emperor, *That one poor Biſhop was too hard for them all.* And indeed ſo big were their Spirits with a deſire to aſſert and propagate their Religion, that they would not hide their Heads to decline the greateſt Dangers. When the Officers were ſent to apprehend St. *Polycarp*, and had with great Induſtry and Cruelty found out the place where he was, though he had timely notice to have eſcaped by going into another Houſe, yet he refuſed, ſaying, *The Will of the Lord be done*; and coming down out of his Chamber, ſaluted the Officers with a chearful and pleaſant Countenance. As they were carrying him back, two Perſons of Eminency and Authority met him in the way, took him up into their Chariot, laboured by all means to perſuade him to do *ſacrifice*; which when he abſolutely refuſed, after all

Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 15. p. 130.

all their Importunities, they turned their *Kindneſs* into *Reproaches*, and tumbled him with ſo much violence out of the Chariot, that he was ſorely *bruiſed* with the Fall; but nothing daunted, as if he had received no harm, he chearfully went on his Way: a Voice being heard as he went along, as it were from Heaven, *Polycarp, be ſtrong, and quit thy ſelf like a Man.* When he came before the Tribunal, the *Proconſul* asked him, whether he was *Polycarp?* which he preſently confeſſed. Then he attempted by all Arts of Perſuaſion to urge him to *deny Chriſt*, or to do but ſomething that might look *like* it; but all in vain: *Theſe fourſcore and ſix Years* (ſays he) *have I ſerved Chriſt, and he never did me any harm; and how then can I blaſpheme my Maſter and my Saviour?* Being urged to ſwear by the Emperor's *Genius*, he replied, Foraſmuch as thou preſſeſt me to do this, pretending thou knoweſt not who I am, know, *I am a Chriſtian.* Then the *Proconſul* told him, he would throw him to the *wild Beaſts*, unleſs he altered his Opinion: Call for them (anſwered *Polycarp*) for we have no mind to change from *better* to *worſe*; as counting that Change only to be honeſt and laudable, which is from *Vice* to *Vertue.* But if thou makeſt ſo light of wild Beaſts (added the *Proconſul*) I'll have a *Fire* that ſhall tame thee. To which the good old Man returned, You threaten, Sir, a Fire that will burn for an *Hour*, and preſently be *extinguiſhed*; but know not, that there is a Fire of *eternal* Damnation in the Judgment to come, reſerved for the Puniſhment of all wicked Men: But why delay you? Execute whatever you have a mind to. This, and much more to the ſame purpoſe he diſcourſed of, to the great Admiration of the *Proconſul*; being ſo far from being terrified with what was ſaid to him, that he was filled with *Joy* and Chearfulneſs; and a certain *Grace* and Lovelineſs overſpread his Face. Chap. 6.

So

Part II.

So likewise when *Cyprian* was brought before the *Proconsul*; Thou art (said he) *Thascius Cyprian*, who hast been a *Ring-leader* to Men of a *wicked* Mind; the Emperor commands thee to do *sacrifice*, and therefore consult thy Welfare. To which he answered, *I am* Cyprian, *I am a Christian, and I cannot sacrifice to your Gods; do therefore what you are commanded: as for me, in so just a Cause there needs no Consultation.* And when the Sentence was pronounced against him, he cried out, *I heartily thank Almighty God, who is pleased to free me from the Chains of this earthly Carcass.* Had Torments and the very Extremities of Cruelty been able to *sink* their Courage, it had soon been trodden under foot; but it was triumphant in the midst of Torments, and lift up its Head *higher*, the greater the Loads that were laid upon it; whereof there are Instances enough in the *Histories* of the Church: Nay, in this Triumph, even the *weaker* Sex bore no inconsiderable part. *Eusebius* tells us (among others that suffered in the *French* Persecution under *M. Aurelius*) of one *Blandina*, a good Woman, but of whom the Church was afraid how she would hold out to make a resolute Confession, by reason of the Weakness of her Body, and the Tenderness of her Education; that when she came to it, she bore up with such invincible Magnanimity, that her Tormenters, though they took their turns from Morning to Night, and plied her with all kinds of Racks and Tortures, were yet forced to *give over*, and confess themselves *overcome*; wondring that a Body so broken and mangled, should yet be able to draw its Breath. But this noble *Athleta* gained strength by suffering, she eased and refreshed her self, and mitigated the sense of present Pain by repeating these Words, *I am a Christian*, and, *no Evil is done by us.* Nor did they only generously bear these things for the sake of their Religion,

Act. Passion. Cyp. in vit. ejus, p. 17.

Hist. Eccl. l. c. 1. *p.* 157.

gion, when they were laid upon them, but many times freely offered themselves, confessing themselves to be *Christians*, when they knew that their Confession would cost their Lives. So did those noble *Martyrs*, whom *Eusebius* saw at *Thebais*, Multitudes having been executed every day with all imaginable Cruelties: Sentence was no sooner pass'd against one Party of them, but others presented themselves before the *Tribunal*, and confessed that they were *Christians*, receiving the fatal Sentence with all possible expressions of Chearfulness and rejoicing. The same which he also reports of six young Men, that suffered in *Palestine*, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governor of the *Province*, owning that they were *Christians*, and ready to undergo the severest Punishments. In the *Acts* of St. *Cyprian*'s Passion, we are told, That the President having caused a mighty *Furnace* to be filled with *burning Lime*, and *Fire*, with Heaps of *Frankincense* round about the Brim of it, gave the *Christians* this Choice, either to *burn* the Frankincense in Sacrifice to *Jupiter*, or to be thrown into the Furnace; whereupon three hundred Men being armed with an unconquerable Faith, and confessing *Christ* to be the *Son of God*, leaped into the midst of the fiery Furnace, with whose Fumes and Vapours they were immediately suffocated and swallowed up.

Πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁπισάμενοι, ὡς ὁμολογήσαντες μὲν χριστιανισμὸν, ἀποθανεῖσθαι ἀρνησάμενοι δὲ ἀπολυθήσεσθαι, καὶ τὰ ἀπόντα ἀπολήψονται, καταφρόνησαν μὲν τοῦ βίου, ἐμμενόντως δὲ τοῦ ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας θάνατον εἵλοντο.
Orig. contr. Cels. l. 2. p. 71.

De Martyr. Palæst. c. 3. p. 321.

Ubi supra p. 16.

There wanted not some, who in the hottest Persecutions durst venture to undertake the Cause of *Christians*, and to *plead* it before the Face of their bittereſt Enemies: Thus did *Vettius Epagatus*, a Man full of Zeal and Piety, who seeing his Fellow-Christians unjustly dragged before the Judgment-Seat, required leave of the *President*, that he might plead

Euſ. l. 5. c. 1. p. 155.

Part II. his Brethrens Cauſe, and openly ſhew, That they were not guilty of the leaſt Wickedneſs and Impiety; but not daring to grant him ſo reaſonable a Requeſt, the Judg took the advantange of asking him, Whether he was a *Chriſtian?* Which he publickly owning, was adjudged to the ſame Martyrdom with the reſt. Of *Origen* we read, That though then but Eighteen Years of Age, yet he was wont not only to wait upon the *Martyrs* in Priſon, but to attend upon them at their Trials, and the Times of their Execution, kiſſing and embracing them, and boldly preaching and profeſſing the Faith of Chriſt; inſomuch, that had he not been many times miraculouſly preſerved, the *Gentiles* had pelted him to death with Stones; for they mortally hated him for his induſtrious and undaunted Propagation of the Faith. Nay, when but a Boy, and his Father *Leontius* was ſeized upon, he wrote to his Father moſt earneſtly preſſing him to perſevere unto Martyrdom, and not to concern himſelf what might become of his Wife and Children; nor for their ſakes to decline that excellent Cauſe he was engaged in.

Ib. l. 6. c. 2. p. 204.

Ib. c. 2. p. 202.

By this free and chearful Undergoing the greateſt Miſeries rather than deny or prejudice their Religion, *Chriſtians* evidently demonſtrated the Goodneſs of their Principles, and ſhewed, they were no ſuch Perſons as their Enemies commonly looked upon them; that a *Chriſtian* (as *Ignatius* obſerves) is not a Child of *Fancy* and Perſuaſion, but of true *Gallantry* and Greatneſs of Spirit, having ſo much Hatred of the World to grapple and contend with. Thoſe who are Malefactors (as *Tertullian* argues) deſire to be concealed, and ſhun to appear; being apprehended, they *tremble*; being accuſed, they *deny*; being racked, do not eaſily, nor always *confeſs* the Truth: however, being condemned, they are ſad, and ſearch into, and cenſure themſelves; are *unwilling* to acknowledg

Epiſt. ad Roman. p. 57.

Apol. c. 1. p. 2.

knowledg their Wickednesses to be their own, and accordingly impute them either to their *Fate* or *Stars*. But what is there like this, to be found in *Christians?* Amongst them no Man is *ashamed*, none *repents* him of being a *Christian*, unless it be that he was no sooner so: If marked out, he *glories*; if accused, he stands not to *defend* himself; being interrogated, he confesses of his own accord; being condemned, he gives thanks: What Evil then can there be in this, which is so far from having any Shadow of *Evil*, any *Fear*, *Shame*, *Tergiversation*, *Repentance*, *or Deplorableness* to attend it? What Evil can that be, of which he that is guilty *rejoices?* of which to be accused, is their *Vote* and *Desire*; and for which to be punished, is their *Happiness* and *Felicity?* This likewise *Arnobius* lays down as a grand Evidence of the Divinity of the Christian Faith, that in so short a time it had conquered so much of the World, subdued Men of the greatest Parts and Learning. Made them willing to quit their beloved *Opinions*, to forfeit their *Estates*, to part with their *Ease* and *Pleasures*, and to submit to Torments rather than violate the Faith of *Christ*, or start from the *Station* they had entred upon. By this excellent Temper and Carriage they admirably triumphed over the best Men amongst the *Gentiles*, none of whom durst engage so deep for the Defence of their dearest Sentiments, as the *Christians* did for theirs: witness *Plato*, who set up the *Academy*, and brought in an *obscure* and *ambiguous* way of delivering his Opinions, lest by speaking out he should fall under the Sentence and the Fate of *Socrates*. Thus *Origen* puts *Celsus* in mind of *Aristotle*, who understanding, that the *Athenians* intended to call him to account for some of his (as they thought them) *un-orthodox* Opinions, immediately removed his School, saying to his Friends, *Let's be gone from*

Chap. 6.

Adv. gent. lib. 2. p. 21.

Cont. Celf. lib. p. 51.

Part. II. Athens, *leſt we give them an Occaſion of being guilty of a ſecond Wickedneſs like to that which they committed againſt* Socrates, *and leſt they again offend againſt the Majeſty of Philoſophy:* It being, alas! not Kindneſs to the *Athenians*, but *Cowardiſe* and Fear of Puniſhment, made him ſo haſtily pack up and be gone, and leave his Opinions behind him to ſhift for themſelves as well as they could. Nay, *Eunapius* himſelf confeſſes, That in the time of *Conſtantine*, when *Paganiſm* began to go down the Wind, and *Chriſtianity* to be advanced and honoured, their beſt Philoſophers, the great Scholars of *Jamblicus*, took Sanctuary at a myſterious *Secrecy*, and wiſely kept their *Dogmata* and Opinions to themſelves, ſealed up under a profound and religious Silence. No, they were the *Chriſtians* only, the very *meaneſt* of whom durſt ſtand by and defend *naked Truth* in the Face of Danger and Death it ſelf; this being (as *Euſebius* notes) one of the moſt wonderful things in the *Chriſtian Religion*, That they who embrace it, are not only ready to profeſs it in Words, but entertain it with ſuch a mighty Affection and Sincerity of Soul, as willingly to prefer the bearing Teſtimony to it even before Life it ſelf. And indeed this piece of right is done them by * *Pliny* himſelf, where ſpeaking of ſome, who having been accuſed for *Chriſtians*, to ſhew how far they were from it, readily *blaſphemed Chriſt*, and *ſacrificed* to the Gods; he adds, *none of which, 'tis ſaid, that they who are truly Chriſtians, can by any means be compelled to do.* Nay, thus much is confeſſed by the *Oracle* it ſelf: for when *Porphyry* the great Philoſopher, and acute Enemy of the Chriſtians, enquired of *Apollo*'s Oracle what *God* he ſhould make his Addreſs to, for the Recovery of his *Wife* back from *Chriſtianity*, the *Oracle* returned him this Anſwer (as himſelf reported in his Book, ὡς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας, not θεολογία φιλοσοφίας, as 'tis corruptly

In vit. Ædeſii. p. 33.

Hiſt. lib. 1. *c.* 3. *p.* 14.

* *Epiſt.* 97. *lib.* 10.

ruptly in St. *Auguſtine*, * a Book frequently cited both by *Euſebius* and *Theodoret*; where by the way, in the *Latin* Verſion of *Theodoret*, 'tis by a ſtrange Miſtake rendred *de Electorum Philoſophia*, as if it had been ἐκλογῶν: In this Book concerning the *Philoſophy* drawn from *Oracles*, he tells us, he received this Anſwer) *That he might as well, and to better purpoſe attempt to write upon the Surface of the Water, or to fly like a Bird in the Air, than to reduce his Wife from thoſe wicked Sentiments ſhe had taken in.* And this was ſo common and notorious, that it became in a manner *Proverbial*; whence that of † *Galen*, when he would expreſs how pertinaciouſly the Philoſophers adhered to thoſe Sentiments they had once drunk in, and how very hard, and almoſt impoſſible it was to convince them; *Sooner*, ſays he, *may a Man undeceive a Jew or a Chriſtian, and make them renounce the Doctrines of* Moſes *or of* Chriſt, *than Philoſophers and Phyſicians that are once addicted to their ſeveral Sects.*

Chap. 7.

* *Apud. Auguſt. de Civ. dei lib.* 19. *c.* 23. *col.* 1181. *de præpar. Evang. lib.* 4. *de Curand. Græc. Affect.*

† Θᾶττον γὰρ ἄνθρωπος τὸν ἀπὸ Μωσέως ἢ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδαξεῖν ἢ τοὺς ταῖς αἱρέσεσι φιλοσοφικόσι ἰατρούς τε καὶ φιλοσόφους. Galen. περὶ διαφ. συγγραμμῶν, lib. 3. fol. 18. p. 2. tom. 3.

CHAP. VII.

Of their Exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

Chriſtianity likely to engage its Followers in ſuffering; and why continual Edicts put forth againſt Chriſtians. The Form of thoſe Imperial Orders exemplified out of the Acts of the Martyrs. The fierce Oppoſition of the Roman *Emperors, and their probable Hopes of having deſtroyed Chriſtianity, evidenced from ſeveral Inſcriptions to that purpoſe found in* Spain. *The Greatneſs of the Torments Chriſtians endured:*

dured: Some of the ordinary kinds of them deſcribed. The Croſs; *the Pain and Ignominy of it: Perſons Crucified with their Heads downwards. The Rack, what.* Cataſta: ad Pulpitum poſt Cataſtam. Ungulæ: *one of theſe kept and adored as a Relique at* Rome. *The Wheel. Burning. Throwing to Wild Beaſts. Being condemned to Mines; their Treatment there, and the caſe of ſuch Perſons. Some of the extraordinary ways of Puniſhment uſed towards Chriſtians. Torn aſunder by Branches of Trees: burnt in pitched Coats: boiled in Pots of Oil or Lead,* &c. *Their Carriage under their Sufferings ſedate and calm, meek and patient. Their refuſing to make uſe of opportunities to avoid ſuffering. Whether they might fly and withdraw in times of Perſecution: Allowed and practiſed in ſome Caſes; two inſtanced in. Where Perſons were of more than ordinary Uſe and Eminency. Where they were weak for the preſent, and not like to hold out. Proved by particular Inſtances. Their chearful offering themſelves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, confeſſed by the Relation of their Judges and bittereſt Adverſaries,* Tiberianus, Arius, Antonius, Lucian. *The earneſt Deſire of Martyrdom in* Ignatius, Laurentius, Origen, *and others. When unjuſtly condemned, their Judges thanked for condemning them. Their Glory in Suffering and being crucified.* Babylas *the Martyr's Chains buried with him. No Signs of an impatient*

patient Mind under their bittereſt Torments. Chap. 7.
An Account of their chearful Suffering, out of Cyprian. *Their Patience wondred at by their Enemies. Their grand Support under Suffering; the Hopes and Aſſurance of a Reward in Heaven. The Caſe of the forty Martyrs in St.* Baſil. *Pſalms ſung at the Funeral of Chriſtians, and Lights carried before the Corps, and why. Chriſtianity vaſtly increaſed by the Patience and Conſtancy of Chriſtians.* Juſtin Martyr's *Account of his Converſion by this means.* Julian *generally refuſed to put Chriſtians to death, and why. The Teſtimonies of ſeveral Heathens concerning the Chriſtians Courage and Patience under Sufferings.*

THAT the Chriſtian Religion at its firſt appearing in the World was likely to engage its Followers in Miſeries and Sufferings, could not be unknown to any that conſidered the *Nature* of its Doctrine, and the *Tendency* of its Deſign. The *Severity* of its Precepts, ſo directly oppoſite to the *corrupt* and vicious Inclinations of Men; the *Purity* of its Worſhip, ſo flatly contrary to the *looſe* and obſcene Rites and Solemnities of the Heathens; its abſolute Inconſiſtency with thoſe Religions which had obtained for ſo many Ages, which then had ſuch firm *Poſſeſſion* of the Minds of Men, and all the *Powers* and *Policies* of the World to ſecure and back them; could not propheſy to it any kind of welcome Entertainment. *This Sect* (for ſo they called it) *was every where* not only *ſpoken*, but *fought againſt:* For ſince Men have a natural Veneration for *Antiquity*, and eſpecially in Matters of Religion, they thought themſelves concerned to defend that way,

Part II. which had been conveyed to them from their *Anceſtors*, and to ſet themſelves with might and main againſt, whatever might oppoſe it: eſpecially the *Great Ones* of thoſe times, and the *Roman Emperors* made it their maſter-deſign to oppreſs and ſtifle this Infant-Religion, and to baniſh it out of the World. Hence thoſe Imperial *Orders* that were daily ſent abroad into all parts of the Empire, to command and impower their Governors to ruine and deſtroy the *Chriſtians*; of which, that wemay the better apprehend the *Form* of them, it may not be amiſs to ſet down one or two of them out of the *Acts of the Martyrs*. This following was agreed upon both by the *Emperors*, and the whole *Senate* of *Rome*. Decius *and* Valerian *Emperors*, *Triumphers*, *Conquerors*, *Auguſt*, *Pious*, *together with the whole Senate*, *have by common Conſent decreed thus: Whereas we have received the Gifts and Bleſſings of the Gods, by whom we enjoy Victory over our Enemies, as alſo temperate Seaſons, and Fruits in great Plenty and Abundance; ſince we have found them our great Benefactors, and to ſupply us with thoſe things that are univerſally beneficial to all: we therefore unanimouſly decree, That all Orders of Men, as well Children as Servants, Soldiers as private Perſons, ſhall offer Sacrifices to the Gods, doing Reverence and Supplication to them. And if any ſhall dare to violate our divine Order thus unanimouſly agreed upon, we command, that he be caſt into Priſon, and afterwards expoſed to ſeveral kinds of Torments. If by this means he be reclaimed, he may expect no mean Honours from us. But if he ſhall perſiſt contumacious, after many Tortures, let him be beheaded, or thrown into the Sea, or caſt out to be devoured by Dogs and Birds of Prey: But eſpecially, if there be any found of the Religion of the* Chriſtians. *As for thoſe that obey our Decrees, they ſhall receive great Honours and Rewards from us. So happily fare ye well.*

Metaphraſt. in Martyr. S. Mercur. apud Sur. ad 24. Novemb. tom. 6.

To

To this we may add that ſhort *Reſcript* of *Valerian*. Valerian *the Emperor, to the Miniſters and Governors of Provinces: We underſtand that the Precepts of the Laws are violated by thoſe who in theſe days call themſelves* Chriſtians. *Wherefore we will, that apprehending them, unleſs they ſacrifice to our Gods, you expoſe them to divers kinds of Puniſhments; that ſo both Juſtice may have place without delay, and Vengeance in cutting off Impieties, having attained its end, may proceed no further.* This Courſe they proſecuted with ſo much Vigour and Fierceneſs, that ſome of them boaſted, that they had abſolutely effected their Deſign. Witneſs thoſe *Trophies* and triumphal *Arches*, that were every where erected to perpetuate the Memory of their Conqueſt over Chriſtianity; whereof theſe two *Inſcriptions*, found at *Clunia* in *Spain*, are a ſufficient evidence. Chap. 7. *Act. Symphor. apud Sur. ad 22 Aug. tom. 4.*

DIOCLESIANUS JOVIUS ET
MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS
CAES. AUG.
AMPLIFICATO. PER ORIEN-
TEM ET OCCIDENTEM,
IMP. ROM.
E T
NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM
DELETO, QUI REMP. EVER-
TEBANT.

Gruter. Inſcript. p. 210. Num. 3.

The other,

DIOCLESIAN. CAES.
AUG. GALERIO IN ORI-
ENTE ADOPT. SUPER-
STITIONE CHRIST--
UBIQ. DELETA, ET CUL-
TU DEOR. PROPAGATO.

Ib. num. 4.

The meaning of both which, is to ſhew, that *Diocleſian* and his Collegue *Maximianus* had every

Part II. ry where distinguished the wicked *Superstition* of *Christ*, so pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had restored *Paganism* and the Worship of the *Gods*. But long before them we find *Nero* (the *first* Emperor that raised Persecution against the *Christians*, as *Tertullian* notes) so active in the Business as to glory (or some Flatterers in his behalf) that he had done the Work; witness an *Inscription* found also in *Spain*.

Ibid. p. 238. *num.* 9.

NERONI CL. CAES.
AUG. PONT. MAX.

OB. PROVINC. LATRONIB.
ET HIS QUI NOVAM
GENERI HUM. SUPER-
STITION. INCULCAB.

PURGATAM.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

This *Inscription* was set up in memory of his having *purged the Country of Robbers, and such as had introduced and obtruded a new Superstition upon Mankind.* The Christians, it's true, are not particularly *named* in it (probably the *Gentiles* so much detested the very name of *Christian*, that especially in publick Monuments they would not mention it) yet can it be meant of no other. For besides that this Character of *inculcating* their Superstition, admirably agrees to *Christians*, who sought by all means to *instil* their Principles into the Minds of Men; besides that *Superstition* was the common *Title* by which the *Gentiles* were wont to denote Christianity; besides

Ad An. Christi, 69.

besides this, there was not (as *Baronius* observes) any other *new* Religion at that time, or long *before* or *after*, that appeared in the World; to be sure, none that could be the object of *Nero*'s Persecution. And how he entertained this, *Tertullian* sufficiently intimates, bidding them search their own *Records*, and they would find. And from this very *Inscription* alone 'tis evident, they thought, that (at least in that part of the World) they had wholly extirpated and rooted it out. By all which we may guess what hot Service the *Christians* had on't under those Primitive Persecutions. Indeed their Sufferings were beyond all imagination great, which yet did but so much the more exercise and advance their Patience; the Bitterness of their Sufferings, making their Patience more eminent and illustrious. Of which, that we may take the truer Measures,'twill be necessary to consider these two things, the *Greatness* of those *Torments* and Sufferings which the Christians generally underwent; and then the *Manner* of their Carriage under them.

Chap. 7.

Apol. c. 5. p. 6.

For the first, the Greatness of those *Torments* and Sufferings which they underwent, they were as bad as the Wit and Malice of either *Men* or *Devils* could invent; in the Consideration whereof we shall first take a View of those Punishments which were more standing and *ordinary*, familiarly used amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and then of such as were *extraordinarily* made use of towards the Christians. Amongst their ordinary Methods of Execution, these six were most eminent; the *Cross*, the *Rack*, the *Wheel*, *Burning*, *wild Beasts*, *and condemning to Mines*.

I. The **Cross** deserves the first place in our Account, not only as having been one of the most *antient* and *universal* ways of Punishment amongst the *Gentiles*, and from them brought in amongst the *Jews*; but as being the Instrument by which our Blessed

Part II. Bleſſed *Saviour* himſelf was put to death. Omitting the various and different Forms and Kinds of it which were all uſed towards the Primitive Chriſtians, I intend here only that which was moſt common, a ſtrait piece of Wood fixed in the Ground, having a tranſverſe Beam faſtened near the Top of it, not unlike the Letter T, though probably it had alſo a piece of Wood ariſing above the top of it. And there were *two things* in this way of Puniſhment, which rendered it very ſevere, the *Pain* and *Ignominy* of it. Painful it muſt needs be, becauſe the Party ſuffering was faſtned to it with *Nails* driven through his *Hands* and *Feet*, which being the Parts where the *Nerves* and *Sinews* terminate and meet together, muſt needs be moſt acutely ſenſible of Wounds and Violence. And becauſe they were pierced only in theſe Parts ſo far diſtant from the *Vitals*, this made their Death very *lingring* and tedious, doubling and trebling every Pain upon them: Inſomuch that ſome out of a generous Compaſſion have cauſed Malefactors firſt to be *ſtrangled* before they were *crucified*; as *Julius Cæſar* did towards the *Pirates*, whom he had ſworn to execute upon the Croſs. But no ſuch Favour was ſhewed to Chriſtians; they were ſuffered to remain in the midſt of all thoſe exquiſite Pangs, till mere Hunger ſtarved them, or the Mercy of wild Beaſts, or Birds of Prey diſpatched them. Thus St. *Andrew* the Apoſtle continued *two whole* Days upon the Croſs, teaching the People all the while. *Timotheus* and his Wife *Maura*, after many other Torments, hung upon the Croſs *nine Days* together, before they compleated their Martyrdom. Nor was the *Shame* of this way of ſuffering leſs than the Pain of it; Crucifixion being the *peculiar* Puniſhment of *Slaves*, *Traitors*, and the vileſt *Malefactors*: inſomuch that for a *Freeman* to die thus was accounted the higheſt Accent

Sueton. in vit. Cæſar. c. 74. p. 76.

Vid. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 8. c. 8. p. 300. Martyrol. Rom. ad diem 30 Nov. p. 736. Ib. ad diem 3 Maii p. 272. Vul. Gallic. in Avid. Caſſ. c. 4. p. 248.

Accent of Ignominy and Reproach: Therefore the *Roman Historian* calls it *servile Supplicium*, a Punishment proper to Slaves. Sometimes they were crucified with their Heads *downwards:* Thus St. *Peter* is said to have been crucified; thus those *Egyptian* Martyrs, who hung in this posture till they were starved out of the World. But this Punishment of the Cross, soon after the World was become Christian, *Constantine* took away out of Reverence to our *Saviour*, not being willing that that should be the *Punishment* of the vilest Malefactors, which had been the Instrument whereupon the Son of God had purchased *Salvation* for Mankind. Chap. 7.

Vid. Lact. de ver. sap. c. 26. p. 436. Euseb. l. 3. c. 1. & l. 8. ubi supra. Sozom. l. 1. c. 8. p. 412.

II. The **Rack**, called in Latin *Equuleus*, either from the Situation of the Offender's Body upon the Engine, resembling a Man on *Horseback*, or rather from the *horsing* or holding of him up to it by Ropes and Skrews. The first design of it was to torment the Guilty, or the suspected Person, to make him *confess* the Truth: What the particular Form of it was, is not agreed amongst learned Men, but this we may probably conceive, That it was an Engine framed of several pieces of Timber joined together, upon the top whereof, upon a long *Board*, the suffering Person being laid along upon his Back, and fastned to it by his Hands and Feet, the Engine was so contrived with Skrews and Pullies, that all his Members were *distended* with the utmost Violence, even to a *Luxation* of all the Parts; and this more or less, accordings to the Tormenters pleasures. Sometimes they were hung by the Hands and Feet under the topboard of the Engine, and tormented in that posture. This Rack was a Punishment which the *Christians* were very frequently put to. Much of the same nature was that which they called the *Catasta*, being a piece of Wood raised up like a little Scaffold, upon which Christians were set, that their Torments

Cic. pro Deiotar. p. 579. tom. 2. Vid. Gallon. de cruciat. martyr. c. 3.

Part II. Torments might be more conspicuous; thence that Proverb in *Cyprian*, *Ad Pulpitum post Catastam venire*, speaking of *Aurelius* a Confessor, who having been publickly tormented upon this Engine, was after ordained a *Reader* in the Church, and promoted to read the Scriptures out of the Pulpit, as he had lately confessed Christ upon the Scaffold. In this, as in that of the Rack, there were certain additional Torments made by Instruments, called *Ungulæ*; which were a kind of *Iron Pincers*, made with sharp Teeth, with which the Flesh was by piece-meal pulled and torn off their Backs.

In the time of Pope *Paul* the Third, one of these *Ungulæ*, as the Author of the *Roma Subterranea* tells us, was among other things found in the *Vatican Cœmetery* amongst the Monuments of the *Martyrs*, and laid up amongst the other *Reliques* of that Church as an inestimable *Treasure*, and a worthy Object of *religious* Worship; being there kept to be seen and *adored* by all Christian People. And another of their Writers being about to describe it, tells us, that though altogether *unworthy* of such a *Favour*, yet he was blessed with the sight of it; and that (as became him) he *kissed* and embraced it with great *Veneration*. Which by the way seems to me a little strange, that it should be accounted an *Honour* and a Kindness done to the *Martyrs*, to adore that which was the *Instrument* of their Torment. Might they not by the same reason as well worship their *Executioners*, and pay a religious Respect to the Ashes of those who dragged them to the Stake, tore off their Flesh, and put them to death with all imaginable Pain and Torture?

Hæc Ungula in sacrarum Sanctuario reliquiarum ejusdem Basilicæ, religioso cultu, tanquam res, omni pretiosior auro, dignissimè asservatur; & Christianorum populo videnda ac veneranda proponitur. Rom. Subter. l. 2. c. 4. num. 16. p. 149. Gallon. ib. c. 5. p. 189.

III. The **Wheel**. This was a *round* Engine, to which the Body of the condemned Person being bound,

bound, was not only extremely distended, but *whirled* about with the most violent Distortion; the Pain whereof was unconceivable, especially as used towards the Primitive *Christians:* The Wheel, to which they were bound naked, being sometimes full of *Iron Pricks*, sometimes a Board full of sharp-pointed Iron Pricks being placed under it; so that every time the Body of the Martyr came to it, they racked off the Flesh with inexpressible Torment. Thus were served those three Martyrs, *Felix* the Presbyter, *Fortunatus* and *Achilleus* the Deacons at *Valentia* in *France*, and hundreds more in other places. Chap. 7. *Ep.* 33. *p.* 47. *Mart. Rom. ad diem April.* 23. *p.* 249.

IV. **Burning.** This was done sometimes by staking them down to a Pile of Wood, and setting it on fire. Thus suffered *Julianus* and others, in the Persecution at *Alexandria*. Sometimes by laying them to roast at a slow gentle Fire, that they might die with the greater Torment. Otherwhiles they were hung up either by the Neck, Hands or Feet, and a Fire made under them, either to *burn* or *choke* them; or burning Torches held to several Parts of their *naked* Bodies. Sometimes they were placed in an *Iron Chair*, or laid upon an *Iron Grate*, which was either made *red-hot*, or had a Fire continually burning under it. Of all which ways of Execution, and some other near a-kin to them, were it not too tedious, I could easily give abundant Instances. This was accounted one of the *prime* ways of *capital* Punishments, and none were adjudged to it but the greatest *Villains*, the *meanest* and vilest Persons. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l.* 6. *c.* 4. *p.* 238. *L.* 28. *Præf. & sect.* 11. *ff. de pœnis. Leg.* 3. *sect.* 5. *ff. l.* 48. *tit.* 8. *ad leg. Corn. de Sicar. & ven.*

V. **Throwing to wild Beasts.** This was a Punishment very common amongst the *Romans*, to condemn a Man to fight for his Life with the most savage Beasts, *Bears*, *Leopards*, *Lions*, &c. and was usually the Portion of the *vilest* and most despicable Offenders; under which Notion the *Gentiles* looking upon the *Christians*, did most commonly condemn

Part II.

demn them to this kind of Death; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner *proverbial*, *Christianos ad Leones*, Away with the *Christians* to the *Lions*. And that they might be devoured with the more ease, they were many *times* tied down to a *Stake*; sometimes clothed in *Beasts Skins*, the more eagerly to provoke the Rage and Fury of the wild Beasts against them.

Tert. Ap. c. 40.

VI. **Condemning to the Mines.** To this the *Romans* adjudged their *Slaves*, and the most infamous Malefactors; and to this too the Christians were often sent. What their *Treatment* was in those places, besides their continual Toil and Drudgery, *Cyprian* lets us know in a Letter to *Nemesian*, and the rest that laboured in the *Mines*, *viz.* That they were cruelly *beaten* with Clubs, *bound* with Chains, forced to lie upon the hard, cold, damp Ground; conflicted with *Hunger*, *Nakedness*, the *Deformity* of their Heads half *shaved*, after the manner of Slaves, and forced to live in the midst of Filth and Nastiness. Besides which, they were wont to be *marked* and branded in the Face, to have their *right Eye* pulled out, and their *left Foot* disabled by cutting the *Nerves* and Sinews of it: Not to say, that being once under this Condemnation, all their *Estate* was forfeited to the Publick Treasury, and themselves for ever reduced into the Condition of *Slaves*. These were some of the more usual ways of Punishment amongst the *Romans*, though exercised towards the Christians in their utmost Rigour and Severity. I omit to speak of Christians being *scourged* and whipped even to the tiring of their Executioners, especially with Rods called *Plumbatæ* (whereof there is frequent mention in the *Theodosian Code*) which were Scourges made of Cords or Thongs, with *leaden* Bullets at the end of them; of their being stoned to Death, their being beheaded, their being thrust into stinking and nasty

Ep. 77. *p.* 155.

Vid. Leg. 8. *Sect.* 4. *ff. qui test. fac. possunt.*

nasty Prisons, where they were set in a kind of Stocks with five Holes, their Legs being stretch'd asunder, to reach from one end to the other. Chap. 7.

We shall now consider some few of those *unusual* Torments and Punishments which were inflicted only upon Christians, or (if upon any others) only in extraordinary Cases. Such was their being *tied* to Arms of Trees, bent by great force and strength by certain Engines, and being suddenly let go, did in a moment tear the Martyr in pieces; in which way many were put to death in the Persecution at *Thebais*. Sometimes they were clad with *Coats* of Paper, Linen, or such like, dawb'd in the inside with Pitch and Brimstone; which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Otherwhiles they were shut into the Belly of a *brazen* Bull; and a Fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a Torment beyond imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great Pot or *Caldron* full of *boiling* Pitch, Oil, Lead, or Wax mixed together; or had these fatal Liquors, by Holes made on purpose, poured into their *Bowels*. Some of them were hung up by one or both Hands, with Stones of great weight tied to their Feet, to augment their Sufferings. Others were *anointed* all over their Bodies with Honey, and at mid-day fastned to the top of a Pole, that they might be a Prey to Flies, Wasps, and such little Cattel, as might by degrees sting and torment them to death. Thus, besides many others, it was with *Marcus* Bishop of *Arethusa*, a venerable old Man, who suffer'd under *Julian* the Apostate; after infinite other Tortures they dawb'd him over with Honey and Jellies, and in a Basket fastned to the top of a Pole, expos'd him to the *hottest* Beams of the Sun, and to the Fury of such little *Insects* as would be sure to prey upon him. Sometimes they were put into a *rotten Ship*, which being turned

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 8. c. 9. p. 300.

Naz. Or. 1. in Jul. p. 89.

Part II. out to Sea, was *set on Fire*. Thus they served an Orthodox *Presbyter* under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperor; the same which *Socrates* reports of fourscore pious and devout Men, who by the same Emperor's Command, were thrust into a Ship, which being brought into open Sea, was presently fir'd, that so by this means they might also want the honour of a Burial. And indeed the Rage and Cruelty of the *Gentiles* did not only reach the Christians while *alive*, but extend to them after *Death*, denying them (what has been otherwise granted amongst the most *barbarous* People) the conveniency of Burial, exposing them to the ravage and fierceness of *Dogs* and Beasts of Prey; a thing which, we are told, the Primitive *Christians* reckon'd as not the least Aggravation of their Sufferings. Nay, where they had been quietly buried, they were not suffered many times (as *Tertullian* complains) to enjoy the *Asylum* of the Grave, but were plucked, cut, rent, and torn in pieces.

Id. Or. 20. *p.*416. *l.*4. *c.* 16. *p.* 227.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. *c.*1. *p.*165. *& de Martyr. Pal. c.*9. *p.*334. *Ap.* 37. *p.* 30.

But to what purpose is it any longer to insist upon these things? Sooner may a Man tell the Stars, than reckon up all those Methods of Misery and Suffering which the Christians endur'd. *Eusebius*, who himself was a sad Spectator of some of the later Persecutions, professes to give over the Account, as a thing beyond all possibility of Expression; the manner of their Sufferings, and the Persons that suffered, being hard, nay, impossible to be reckon'd up. The truth is, (as he there observes, and *Cyprian* plainly tells *Demetrian* of it) their Enemies did little else but set their Wits upon the Tenters, to find out the most *exquisite* Methods of Torture and Punishment: They were not content with those old ways of Torment which their Forefathers had brought in, but by an ingenious Cruelty daily invented new; striving to excel one another in this piece of hellish Art, and accounting those the wittiest

Lib. 8. *c.* 12. *p.*307.

Cypr. ad Demetr. p. 200.

tieſt Perſons that could invent the bittereſt and moſt barbarous Engines of Execution: and in this they improved ſo much, that *Ulpian*, *Maſter of Records* to *Alexander Severus* the Emperor, and the great *Oracle* of thoſe Times for Law, writing ſeveral Books *De Officio Proconſulis* (many parcels whereof are yet extant in the Body of the *Civil Law*) in the *ſeventh* Book collected together the ſeveral bloody *Edicts* which the Emperors had put out againſt the *Chriſtians*; that he might ſhew by what Ways and Methods they ought to be puniſhed and deſtroyed, as *Lactantius* tells us. But this Book (as to what concerned *Chriſtians*) is not now extant, the Zeal and Piety of the firſt Chriſtian Emperors having baniſhed all Books of that nature out of the World; as appears by a Law of the Emperor *Theodoſius*, where he commands the Writings of *Porphyry*, and all others that had written againſt the *Chriſtian Religion*, to be burned: the reaſon why we have no more Books of the Heathens concerning the Chriſtians extant at this day.

Chap. 7.

De juſtit. l. 5. *c.* 11. *p.* 491.

L. 3. *C. de Sum. Trin. ſect.* 1.

Having given this brief *Specimen* of ſome few of thoſe grievous Torments to which the Primitive Chriſtians were expoſed (they that would have more, muſt read the *Martyrologies* of the Church, or ſuch as have purpoſely written on this Subject) we come next to conſider what was their *Behaviour* and *Carriage* under them. This we ſhall find to have been moſt *ſedate* and *calm*, moſt conſtant and reſolute; they neither *fainted* nor *fretted*; neither railed at their Enemies, nor ſunk under their hands: but bore up under the heavieſt Torments, under the bittereſt Reproaches, with a Meekneſs and Patience that was invincible, and ſuch as every way became the mild, and yet generous Spirit of the Goſpel. So *Juſtin Martyr* tells the *Jew*; We patiently bear (ſays he) all the Miſchiefs which are

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 236.

Part II. brought upon us either by Men or Devils, even to the Extremities of Death and Torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find Mercy, not desiring to hurt or revenge our selves upon any that injure us, according as our great *Lawgiver* has commanded us. Thus *Eusebius* reporting the hard Usage which the Christians met with during the Times of Persecution, tells us, That they were betrayed and butchered by their own Friends and Brethren; but they, as courageous Champions of the true Religion, accustomed to prefer an honourable *Death*, in Defence of the Truth, before *Life* it self, little regarded the cruel Usage they met with in it: But rather, as became true Soldiers of God, *armed* with Patience, they laughed at all Methods of Execution, Fire and Sword, and the piercing of Nails, wild Beasts, and the bottom of the Sea, cutting and burning of Limbs, putting out Eyes, and mutilation of the whole Body, Hunger, and digging in Mines, Chains and Fetters; all which, for the great Love that they had to their *Lord* and *Master*, they accounted *sweeter* than any Happiness or Pleasure whatsoever. Nay, the very *Women* in this case were as courageous as the *Men*, many of whom undergoing the same Conflicts, reaped the same Rewards of their Constancy and Vertue. But this will more distinctly appear in a few particular Cases.

Orat. de. Laud. Const. c. 7. p. 622.

First, Whenever they were sought for, in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of *Opportunities* to escape. *Polycarp*, at his Apprehension, refused to fly; though going but into the next House, he might have saved his Life. *Cyprian* writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired (I suppose he means by their *Gentile* Friends and Relations) to go out of Prison, they chose rather to abide there still, than to make their own Escape; telling them

Ep. ad Mosen & Max. Ep. 15. p. 28.

they

they had made as many Confessions, as they had had Opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though (it's true) he himself withdrew from *Carthage*, when the Officers were sent to take him and carry him to *Utica*, yet he did it (as he tells his People) by the Advice of some Friends; but for this reason, that when he did suffer, he might suffer at *Carthage*, whereof he was Bishop; and that those Truths which he had preached to them in his Life, he might *seal* before them with his *Blood*: a thing he earnestly and daily begg'd of God, and which was granted to him afterwards. And if they did not run away from Suffering, much less did they *oppose* it, and make Tumults and Parties to defend themselves; no, they were led as *Lambs to the Slaughter, and as Sheep before the Shearers are dumb, so opened not they their Mouth, but committed their Cause to him that judges righteously*, and who has said *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it*. None of us (says *Cyprian* to the Governour) when apprehended, makes Resistance, nor (though our Party be large and numerous) revenges himself for that unjust Violence that you offer to us. We patiently acquiesce in the assurance of a future Vengeance; the *Innocent* truckle under the *Unrighteous*; the *Guiltless* quietly submit to *Pains* and Tortures; knowing for certain, that whatever we now suffer shall not remain unpunished; and that the greater the Injury that is done us in these Persecutions we endure, the more just and heavy will be that Vengeance that will follow it. Never was any wicked Attempt made against Christians, but a Divine *Vengeance* was soon at the heels of it. But tho they thus resolutely stood to it, when the Honour of their Religion lay at stake; yet it must not be denied, that in some Cases they held it lawful and convenient to *fly* in Times of Persecution. *Tertullian* indeed, in a Book purposely

Chap. 7.

Ep. 83. *p.* 161.

Ad Demetrian. p. 202.

Lib. de fug. in persecut.

Part II. posely written on this Subject, maintains it to be simply and absolutely unlawful for Christians to fly at such a time; an Assertion which with all the Subtilties of his Wit, and the Flourishes of his *African* Eloquence, he endeavours to render fair and plausible: But besides the strictness and rigid Severity of the Man at all times, this Book was composed after his complying with the Sect of the *Montanists*, whose peculiar Humour it was to out-do the *Orthodox* by overstraining the Austerities of Religion; as appears not only in this, but in the Case of *Marriages*, *Fasts*, *Penances*, and such like. Otherwise, before his espousing those Opinions, he seems elsewhere to speak more favourably of shunning Persecution. But whatever he thought in the Case, 'tis certain the generality of the Fathers were of another mind, That Christians might, and ought to use Prudence in this Affair, and at some times withdraw, to avoid the storm when it was a-coming, especially in these two Cases:

De patient. c. 13. *p.* 147.

I. When Persons were of more than ordinary *Use* and Eminency, the saving of whom might be of great Advantage to the Church. A Christian that flies in this Case (as *Origen* tells *Celsus*) does it not for fear, but in a prudent Compliance with his Lord's Direction, and with a design to keep himself undefiled, that he may be able to minister to the Salvation of others. Thus St. *Paul* was let down the Wall in a *Basket*, when the Governour of *Damascus* sought his Life. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew from *Carthage*, and lay hid for two Years together, during which time he gave secret Orders for governing of the Church. Thus *Athanasius*, when *Syrianus* and his Soldiers broke into the Church to apprehend him, was by the universal cry both of Clergy and People persuaded, and in a manner forced to retire and save himself; in which retirement he continued so long, that the *Arians* charg'd him

Lib. 8. *p.* 405.

Athan. Apol. de fug. sua. tom. 1. *p.* 545.

him with Fear and Cowardice: insomuch, that for his own Vindication he was forced to write an *Apology* for himself, wherein he learnedly and eloquently discourses the whole Affair, justifying himself from the instances in the Old Testament, of *Jacob*, *Moses*, *David*, *Elias*; from the Example of *Christ* himself, and his Apostles, in the New; from the plain and positive allowance of the Gospel, *When they persecute you in one City, flee unto another*; and that *when they should see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy Place* (*i. e.* the Miseries that were to come upon *Jerusalem* by the *Roman* Army) *they should fly unto the Mountains*; *and if upon the House-top, or in the Field, not turn back to fetch any thing that was left behind*: That 'twas necessary for the Apostles to shun the Storm, because they were the *Instruments* immediately deputed to propagate and convey the Gospel to the World: That they were herein imitated by the Primitive Saints and Martyrs, *who wandered about in Deserts and Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth*; being equally careful to avoid the two extreams, of *Rashness* and *Cowardice*, they would neither *thrust* themselves upon Danger, nor *basely run* from Death when called to it; like wise *Physicians*, reserving themselves for the use of those that needed their Assistance. All which, and a great deal more, he rationally argues in that *Apology*. Chap. 7.

II. Another Case wherein they accounted it lawful for Persons to retire under Persecutions, was, when being but *new* Converts, and as yet *weak* in the Faith, they look'd upon them as not likely to bear the shock and brunt of the Persecution; in this Case they thought it better for them to *withdraw* for the present, than to put them under a Temptation of being drawn back to Paganism and Idolatry. Thus when *Gregory* Bishop of *Neocæsarea* saw the *Decian* Persecution grow extreme hot and violent, *Nyssen. Orat. de vit. Greg. Thaumat. p.* 1001. *tom.* 2.

Part. II. conſidering the Frailty and Infirmity of Human Nature, and how few would be able to bear up under thoſe fierce Conflicts that muſt be undergone for the ſake of Religion, perſuaded his Church a little to decline that dreadful and terrible Storm; telling them, 'Twas a great deal better to *ſave* their Souls by flying, than by abiding thoſe furious Trials, to run the hazard of *falling* from the Faith. And that his Counſel might make the deeper impreſſion upon them, and he might convince them that in thus doing, there was no danger or prejudice to their Souls, he reſolved to ſhew them the way by his own *Example*; and himſelf firſt retiring out of the reach of Danger, retreated to the mountainous parts thereabouts, that were freeſt from the Rage and Malice of the Enemy. Nor was this any *Impeachment* of their Zeal and Readineſs for Suffering, but only a prudent gaining a little reſpite for a time, that they might ſuffer with greater advantage afterwards. They did not deſire to ſave their Heads, when the Honour of their Religion called for it, nor ever by indirect Means skrew'd themſelves out of danger, when once engaged in it; though they did ſometimes prudently prevent it, reſerving themſelves for a more convenient Seaſon. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew a little, not out of fear of Suffering, but a deſire to prevent his being put to death in an *obſcure* place (which his Enemies had deſigned) being deſirous his Martyrdom ſhould happen in that place where he ſo long lived, and ſo publickly preach'd the Chriſtian Faith.

Secondly, They were ſo far from declining Sufferings, and being terrifyed with thoſe Miſeries which they ſaw others undergo, that they freely, and in great multitudes *offered* themſelves to the Rage and Fury of their Enemies; embracing Death as the greateſt *Honour* that could be done them: They ſtrove (as

Sulpitius

Sulpitius Severus obſerves, ſpeaking of the ninth Perſecution, (which ſhould ruſh firſt upon thoſe glorious Conflicts; Men in thoſe Days (as he adds) much more greedily ſeeking *Martyrdom* in the Cauſe of *Chriſt*, than in After-times they did for *Biſhopricks* and the Preferments of the Church. *Lucian*, who certainly had very little love to Chriſtians, yet gives this account of them, The miſerable Wretches (ſays he, οἱ κακοδαίμονες) do verily perſuade them, *i. e.* thoſe of their own Party, that they ſhall ſurely be *immortal* and live for ever; upon which account they *deſpiſe* Death, and many of them voluntarily offer themſelves to it. Indeed they did ambitiouſly contend who ſhould be firſt crowned with Martyrdom, and that in ſuch Multitudes, that their Enemies knew not what to do with them, their very Perſecutors grew weary of their bloody Offices. *Tiberianus*, the Preſident of *Paleſtine*, in his Relation to the Emperor *Trajan* (recorded by *Joannes Malela*, mentioned alſo by *Suidas*) gives this account of his Proceedings againſt them: *I am quite tired out in puniſhing and deſtroying the* Galileans *(called here by the name of* Chriſtians*) according to your Commands, and yet they* ceaſe not *to offer themſelves to be ſlain: Nay, though I have laboured both by fair Means and Threatnings to make them conceal themſelves from being known to be Chriſtians, yet can I not ſtave them off from Perſecution.* So little regard had they to Sufferings; nay, ſo impatient were they till they were in the midſt of Flames! This made *Arrius Antonius* the Proconſul of *Aſia*, when at firſt he ſeverely perſecuted the Chriſtians, whereupon all the Chriſtians in that City like an *Army*, voluntarily preſented themſelves before his Tribunal, to be ſurprized with wonder; and cauſing only ſome few of them to be executed, he cried out to the reſt, *O unhappy People! if you have a mind to die, have you not Halters and Precipices enough to*

Chap. 7.

Sac. Hiſt. lib. 2 p. 143.

De Mort. Peregr. tom. 2. p. 763.

Apud Uſſer. Appen. Ignat. p. 9. ex Jo. Malel. Chron. lib. 11. vid. Annot. in Ep. ad. Philad. not. 82. in voc. Τραϊανός.

Tertul. ad Scap. c. 4. p. 71.

Part II. *to end your Lives, but you muſt come hither for an Execution?* So faſt did they flock to the place of Torment, faſter than *Droves* of Beaſts that are driven to the Shambles! They even longed to be in the Arms of Suffering. *Ignatius*, though then in his Journy to *Rome* in order to his Execution, yet by the way as he went could not but vent his paſſionate Deſire of it. O that I might come to thoſe *wild Beaſts* that are prepared for me! I heartily wiſh that I may preſently meet with them; I would invite and encourage them *ſpeedily* to devour me, and not be afraid to ſet upon me as they have been to others; nay, ſhould they refuſe it, I would even *force* them to it: I am concerned for nothing either *ſeen* or *unſeen*, more than to enjoy *Jeſus Chriſt*: Let *Fire* and the *Croſs*, and the Rage of *wild Beaſts*, the Breaking of *Bones*, *Diſtortion* of Members, *Bruiſing* of the whole Body; yea, all the Puniſhments which the *Devil* can invent, come upon me, ſo as I may but enjoy *Chriſt*. They even envied the Martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind. When *Laurentius* the Deacon eſpied *Sixtus* the Biſhop of *Rome* going to his Martyrdom, he burſt into Tears, and paſſionately called out, Whither, O my *Father*, art thou going without thy *Son?* Whither ſo faſt, O Holy Biſhop, without thy *Deacon?* Never did'ſt thou uſe to offer Spiritual *Sacrifice* without thy *Miniſter* to attend thee. What have I done that might diſpleaſe thee? Haſt thou found me *degenerous* and fearful? Make trial at leaſt, whether thou haſt choſen a fit Miniſter to wait upon thee. To this, and more to the ſame import, the good Biſhop replied, Miſtake not, *my Son*, I do not leave thee nor *forſake* thee; greater Tryals belong to *thee*: I, like a weak old Man, receive only the firſt Skirmiſhes of the Battel; but thou being youthful and valiant, haſt a more glorious Triumph over the Enemy *reſerved*

Euſeb. H. E. lib. 3. c. 36. p. 107.

Ambr. offic. lib. 1. c. 42. tom. 1. p. 26.

ſerved for thee: Ceaſe to weep, thy turn will be preſently; for within *three Days* thou ſhalt follow me. So pious a Contention was there between theſe good Men, which of them ſhould firſt ſuffer for the Name of Chriſt! 'Tis memorable, what we find concerning *Origen*, though then but a Youth, That when a great Perſecution was raiſed at *Alexandria*, wherein many ſuffered, he was ſo eagerly inflamed with a deſire of Martyrdom (eſpecially after his Father had been ſeized upon and caſt into Priſon) that he expoſed himſelf to all Dangers, and courted Torments to come upon him; and had certainly ſuffered, if his Mother, after all other Intreaties and Perſuaſions to no purpoſe, had not ſtolen away his *Clothes* by Night, and for mere ſhame forced him to ſtay at home. Chap. 7. *Euſeb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 2. p. 202.*

To theſe I ſhall add but one Example of the weaker Sex. When *Valens*, the *Arian* Emperor, (who perſecuted the *Orthodox* with as much Fury and Bitterneſs as any of the Heathen Emperors) came to *Edeſſa*, and found there great Numbers of them daily meeting in their publick Aſſemblies, he ſeverely checked the Governour, and commanded him by all means to rout and ruin them. The Governour, though of another Perſuaſion, yet out of common Compaſſion, gave them *private* Notice of the Emperor's Commands, hoping they would forbear. But they not at all terrified with the News, met the next Morning in greater Numbers, which the Governour underſtanding, went to the Place of their Aſſembly: As he was going, a Woman in a careleſs Dreſs, leading a little Child in her Hand, ruſhed through the Governour's *Guard*; who commanding her to be brought before him, asked her, Why ſhe made ſo much *haſte?* That I may the *ſooner* come *(ſaid ſhe)* to the Place where the People of the *Catholick* Church are met together. *Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 18. p. 660.*

Know-

Part II. Knoweſt thou not *(ſays he)* that the Governour will be there to day, and *kill* all whom he finds there? I know it well *(anſwered the Woman)* and therefore make ſo much haſte, leſt I come too late, and be deprived of the *Crown* of Martyrdom. And being asked, Why ſhe carried her *little Son* along with her? She anſwered, That he alſo may *partake* of the common Sufferings, and ſhare in the ſame Rewards. The *Governour* admiring the Courage of the Woman, turned back to the *Palace*, and diſſuaded the Emperor from his cruel Reſolution, as what was neither *honourable* in it ſelf, nor would *conduce* to his Purpoſes and Deſigns.

Thirdly, When they were condemned, though it was by a moſt unjuſt Sentence, and to a moſt horrid Death, they were ſo far from raging or repining, that inſtead of bitter and tart Reflections, they *gave Thanks* to their Enemies for condemning them. A Chriſtian being condemned (ſays *Tertullian*) thanks his Judges, he takes it for a favour to die for ſo good a Cauſe. That they perſecute us (ſays *Clemens* of *Alexandria*) it is not becauſe they find us to be *wicked*, but becauſe they think we wrong the World by being Chriſtians, and by teaching and perſuading others to be ſo: as for us, they do us no harm, Death does but the ſooner ſend us to God; if therefore we be wiſe, we ſhall thank them that are the occaſion of our more ſpeedy Paſſage thither. And elſewhere he tells us of St. *Peter*, that ſeeing his Wife going towards Martyrdom, he exceedingly rejoiced that ſhe was called to ſo great an *Honour*, and that ſhe was now returning home; encouraging and exhorting of her, and calling her by her Name, bad her be mindful of the *Lord*. Such (ſays he) was the Wedlock of that bleſſed Couple, and their perfect Diſpoſition and Agreement in thoſe things that were deareſt to them!

Apol. c. 46. p. 36.

Strom. lib. 4. p. 505.

Lib. 7. p. 736.

When

Chap. 7.

When *Lucius*, one of the Primitive Martyrs, was charged by *Urbicius*, the *Roman* Prefect, for being a Christian, only becauſe he offered to ſpeak in behalf of one that had very hard Meaſure, he immediately confeſſed it, and being forthwith condemned, he heartily thanked his Judg for it, that by this means he ſhould be delivered from ſuch unrighteous Governours, and be ſooner ſent home to his Heavenly Father. No joyfuller Meſſage could be told them, than that they muſt die for the ſake of Chriſt. Though we contend with all your Rage and Cruelty (as *Tertullian* tells the Preſident *Scapula*) yet we freely offer our ſelves, and rejoice more when we are condemned, than when we are abſolved and releaſed by you. In deſpite of all the Malice of their Enemies, they accounted the *Inſtruments* of their Torment, the *Enſigns* of their Honour and their Happineſs. When the Heathens reproached them for dying ſuch an infamous Death as that of the *Croſs*, and in deriſion ſtiled them *Sarminticii* and *Semaxii*, for being burnt upon a little Stake to which they were bound with *Twigs*; *Tertullian* anſwers for them, *This is the Habit of our Victory, this is the embroidered Garment of our Conqueſt, this the triumphant Chariot wherein we ride to Heaven.* When in Priſon, they looked upon their *Chains* as their *Ornaments*; as adding a Beauty and Luſtre to them, with which they were adorned againſt the time of their Suffering, as the Bride is with Fringes of Gold, and variegated Ornaments againſt the Day of her Eſpouſals. For this reaſon *Babylas* the Martyr commanded that the *Chains* which he had worn in Priſon, ſhould be *buried* with him, to ſhew that thoſe things which ſeem moſt ignominious, are for the ſake of Chriſt moſt ſplendid and honourable; imitating therein the great *Apoſtle*, who was ſo far from being aſhamed of, that he took pleaſure in *Bonds*, *Chains*, *Reproaches*,

Juſt. Martyr. Apol. 1. p. 43.

Ad Scap. c. 1. p. 68.

Apol. c. 50. p. 39.

Euſeb. H. Eccl, lib. 5. c. 1. p. 160. C.

Chryſoſt. l. de St. Babyl. tom. 1. p. 669.

Part II. *proaches, Perſecutions, Diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake*; profeſſing to *glory in nothing but the Croſs of Chriſt.*

Fourthly, Whenever they were actually under the bittereſt Torments, they never diſcovered the leaſt ſign of a *furious* or *impatient* Mind, but bore up with a Quietneſs and Compoſure which no Sufferings could overcome. *Cyprian*, exhorting the Martyrs to Courage and Conſtancy, tells them this of thoſe that had gone before them, That in the hotteſt Conflict they never ſtirred, but maintained their ground with a *free* Confeſſion, an *unſhaken* Mind, a *divine* Courage, deſtitute indeed of *external* Weapons, but armed with the *Shield* of *Faith*; in Torments they ſtood *ſtronger* than their Tormenters; their bruiſed and mangled Limbs proved too hard for the Inſtruments wherewith their Fleſh was racked and pulled from them; the Blows, though never ſo oft repeated, could not conquer their impregnable Faith, although they did not only ſlice and tear off the Fleſh, but rake into their very Bowels; and let out Blood enough to extinguiſh the Flames of Perſecution, and to *allay* the Heats of the Everlaſting Fire. And in another place, ſpeaking of the Perſecution under *Decius* at *Rome*, he tells us, That the Adverſary did with an horrible Violence break in upon the *Camp* of *Chriſt*, but was repulſed with a ſtrength as great as that wherewith he came upon them: That then he craftily attempted the more rude and weak, and ſubtilly endeavoured to ſet upon them ſingly, hoping the eaſilier to circumvent them; but that he found them like a *well-compacted* Army, ſober and vigilant, and prepared for Battel: that they could *die*, but could not be *overcome*; yea, therefore *unconquerable*, becauſe not afraid to die; that they did not reſiſt thoſe that roſe up againſt them, being ready not to kill them

Epiſt. 8. *p.* 19.

Ad Cornel. Epiſt. 57. *p.* 91.

them that assaulted them, but to lay down their own Lives, and to lose their Blood, that they might make the more haste to get out of a cruel and malicious World. Indeed, so admirable was their Patience and Readiness to die, that their very *Enemies* stood amazed at it. When *Simeon*, the second Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and of our *Saviour's* Kindred according to the Flesh, had, by the Command of *Atticus* the Governour of *Syria*, been tortured with all the Arts of Cruelty for many Days together; he bore it with such Courage, that the *Proconsul* himself, and all that were present, greatly wondered, that a Man of an *hundred and twenty Years* of Age should be able to undergo so many Miseries and Torments. Of the Martyrs that suffered together with St. *Polycarp*, the Church of *Smyrna* gives this Account; That all that were present were astonished when they saw them whipped till the Cords made way to the *inmost* Veins and Arteries, till the *Bowels* and the most hidden Parts of the Body appeared. They were raked with Shells of Fishes, laid all along upon sharp-pointed Stakes driven into the ground, exercised with all sorts of Torments, and at last thrown to be devoured of Wild Beasts; all which they bore with a mighty Patience and Constancy: Nay (as we find it in the first part of that *Epistle* contracted by *Eusebius*, but published at large by Bishop *Usher*) so great was their Patience and Magnanimity, that in all their Sufferings not any of them gave a *Sigh* or a *Groan*; the Holy Martyrs of Christ *(says the Epistle)* evidently shewing us, That during this sad Hour of Suffering they were *Strangers* to their own Bodies, or rather, that our *Lord* himself stood by them, and familiarly conversed with them; and that being Partaker of his *Grace*, they made light of these *Temporal* Torments, and by one short Hour deli-

Chap. 7.

Euseb. l.3. c. 32. p. 104.

Id. lib. 4. c.15.p.129.

Append. Ignatian. par.2.p.14.

Part II. delivered themſelves from *Eternal* Miſeries. The Fire, which their Tormenters put to them, ſeemed to them but *cool* and *little*, while they had it in their Thoughts to avoid the everlaſting and unextinguiſhable *Flames* of another World: their Eyes being fixed upon thoſe Rewards which are prepared for them *that endure to the End*, ſuch *as neither Ear hath heard, nor Eye hath ſeen, nor hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive*; but which were ſhewn to them by our *Lord*, as being now ready to go off from Mortality, and to enter upon the State of *Angels*.

Encom. in 40 Martyr. append. ad. oper. Greg. Thaum. p. 85.

Thus reaſoned thoſe forty Martyrs in St. *Baſil*, that ſuffered at *Sebaſtia* in *Armenia*, in the Reign of *Licinius*, when the Governour, to contrive a new Method of Torment, had commanded them to ſtand *naked* all Night in cold froſty Weather (which in thoſe more *Northerly* Countries is extreme ſharp and bitter, it being then the depth of Winter, and the *North* Wind blowing very fierce) in a *Pond* of Water; they firſt gave Thanks to God that they put off their *Clothes* and their *Sins* together, and then comforted one another by ballancing their *preſent* Hardſhips with their *future* Hopes: Is the Weather *ſharp?* (ſaid they) but *Paradiſe* is *comfortable* and delightful: Is the *Froſt* cold and bitter? The *reſt* that remains is ſweet and pleaſant; let us but hold out a *little*, and *Abraham*'s Boſom will refreſh us; we ſhall change this *one* Night for an *eternal* Age of Happineſs. Let our *Feet glow* with very *Cold*, ſo as they may for ever rejoice and triumph with Angels; let our *Hands ſink* down, ſo as we may have liberty to lift them up to God. How many of our Fellow-Soldiers have loſt their Lives to keep Faith to their *Temporal* Prince? And ſhould we be unfaithful to the true *King* of Heaven? How many have juſtly died for their Crimes and Villanies? And ſhall we refuſe, in the Cauſe of *Righteouſneſs* and Religion?

gion? 'Tis but the *Flesh* that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us *die* that we may *live*. Thus generously did they bear up under this uncomfortable State; their ardent Desires of Heaven from within, extinguishing all sense of Cold and Hardship from without. Nay, when a little before, their Commander had set upon them both with Threatnings and Promises; assuring them, That if they would but *deny Christ*, they should make their own Terms for Riches and Honour: they told him, That he laid his *Snares* at a wrong door; that he could not give them what he endeavour'd to *take* from them; nor could they close with his Offers, without being infinitely Losers by the Bargain: that 'twas to no purpose to proffer a little of the World to them, who despised the whole of it: that all these visible Advantages were nothing to what they had in Hope and Expectation; all the Beauty and Glory of Heaven and Earth not being comparable to that State of Blessedness, which is the *Portion* of the Righteous; the one being *short-liv'd* and transitory, the other *permanent* and perpetual: that they were ambitious of no *Gift*, but the Crown of Righteousness, nor sought after any other *Glory* but what was *Heavenly*: that they *feared* no Torments but those of *Hell*, and that Fire that was truly terrible: As for those Punishments they inflicted, they accounted them but as the *Blows* of Children; and the ill Usage that their Bodies met with, the longer 'twas endured, the more way it made for a *brighter* Crown. Such was the Temper, such the Support of these Christian Soldiers, these *true Champions* of the Christian Faith!

Chap. 7. *Ib. p.* 81.

Indeed this Consideration was one of the greatest Cordials that kept up their Spirits under the saddest Sufferings, That they were assured of a Reward in Heaven. Amongst us (says *Cyprian*) there flourishes Strength *Ad Demet. p.* 202.

Part II. Strength of *Hope*, Firmneſs of *Faith*, a Mind *erect* amongſt the Ruins of a tottering Age, and immoveable *Vertue*, a *Patience* ſerene and cheerful, and a Soul always *ſecure* and certain of its *God*. As for Want or Danger, what are theſe to Chriſtians, to the Servants of God, whom *Paradiſe* invites, and the Favour and Plenty of the *Heavenly* Kingdom expects and waits for? They are always glad, and rejoice in God, and reſolutely bear the Evils and Miſeries of the World, while they look for the Rewards and Proſperities of another Life. The great *Philoſophers* (as *Euſebius* obſerves) as much as they talk'd of *Immortality*, yet by their Carriage they ſhewed, that they look'd upon it but as a trifling and childiſh *Fable:* Whereas (ſays he) amongſt us, even *Girls* and *Children*, the moſt unlearned and (meaſured by the Eye) the meaneſt and moſt deſpicable Perſons, being aſſiſted by the Help and Strength of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, do rather by their *Actions* than their *Words*, demonſtrate and make good this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. This *Julian* confeſſes of the *Chriſtians*, though according to his Cuſtom, he gives them bad Words, calls them *Atheiſts* and irreligious Perſons; that being acted by ſome evil Spirits, they perſuade themſelves, that Death is by all means to be deſired, and that they ſhall immediately *fly* to Heaven, as ſoon as their Souls are freed from the *Fetters* of the Body. Hence it was, that in thoſe times Chriſtians were wont to ſing *Hymns* and *Pſalms* at the *Funerals* of the Dead, to ſignify, That they had attain'd their *Reſt*, the End of their Labours, the Retribution of their Troubles, the Reward and the Crown of their Conflicts and Sufferings, as *Chryſoſtom* tells us; part of which *Pſalms*, he elſewhere tells us, were, *Return unto thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* and, *I will fear no Evil, becauſe thou*

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. *c.* 4. *p.* 13.

Fragm. ep. oper. part 1. *p.* 528.

Hom. 51. *de SS. Bern. & Proſd. Tom.* 1. *p.* 563.

Hom. 4. *ad Hebr. p.* 1785.

thou art with me: and again, *Thou art my Refuge from the Trouble that compasses me about.* For the same reason, as being a sign of *Joy* and Cheerfulness, he there tells us, That they carry'd *Lights* burning before the Corps. By all which, he tells us, they signify'd, That they carry'd forth *Christians* as *Champions* to the Grave, glorifying God, and giving thanks to him, that he had *crowned* the deceased Person, that he had delivered him from his Labours, that he had taken him to himself, and set him beyond the reach of Storms and Fears. Chap. 7. *Psal.* 116. *Psal.* 44. *Ib. p.* 1784.

But to return: There was scarce any one Instance of Religion, wherein Primitive Christianity did more openly *approve* it self to the World, and more evidently *insult* over *Paganism*, than the generous Courage and Patience of its Professors. By this they commended both the *Truth* and *Excellency* of their Religion, and conquer'd their very Enemies into an embracing of it. Hear how *Lactantius* pleads the Argument, and triumphs in the goodness of his Cause: By reason (says he) of our strange and wonderful Courage and Strength, *new additions* are made to us; for when the People see Men torn in pieces with infinite variety of Torments, and yet maintain a Patience *unconquerable* and able to tire out its Tormenters; they begin to think (what the Truth is) that the *Consent* of so many, and the *Perseverance* of dying Persons cannot be in vain; nor that *Patience* it self, were it not from God, could hold out under such Racks and Tortures: *Thieves*, and Men of *robust* Body, are not able to bear such tearing in pieces; they groan and cry out, and are overcome with Pain, because not endu'd with a Divine Patience; but our very *Children*, and *Women* (to say nothing of our *Men*) do with silence *conquer* their Tormenters; nor can the hottest Fire force the least Groan from them. Let the *Romans* go now *De Justit. l.* 5. *c.* 13. *p.* 495.

Part II. and boaſt of their *Mutius* and *Regulus*, of the one for delivering himſelf up to his Enemy, to be put to *death*, becauſe he was aſham'd to *live* a Priſoner; of the other, for burning his Hand at the Command of the Enemy to ſave his Life. Behold! with us the *weaker* Sex, and the moſt *tender* Age can ſuffer all parts of their Body to be torn and burnt; not out of *Neceſſity*, becauſe they might not eſcape if they would, but out of *Choice*, becauſe they believe in God. This is that true *Vertue* which Philoſophers indeed vainly *boaſt* of, but never really *poſſeſſed*. This, and more to the ſame purpoſe, that eloquent *Apologiſt* there urges, to the great Honour of his Religion. By the force of ſuch Arguments *Juſtin Martyr* confeſſes, That he was brought over from being a *Platonick* Philoſopher to be a *Chriſtian*: for when he ſaw the *Chriſtians*, whom he had ſo often heard accuſed and traduced, undauntedly going to *die*, and embracing the moſt terrible Executions that were prepared for them; *I thought with my ſelf* (ſays he) *that it was not poſſible ſuch Perſons ſhould wallow in Vice and Luxury: it being the Intereſt of all wicked and voluptuous Perſons to ſhun Death, to diſſemble with Princes and Magiſtrates, and to do any thing to ſave their Lives.*

Ap. 1. *p.* 50.

This certainly could not but be a huge ſatisfaction to all prudent and conſiderate Men, That the Chriſtians were guided by *better* Principles than ordinary, and that they were fully aſſur'd, that *theirs* was the *true* Religion, and that they taught nothing but what they firmly believed to be true. For to maintain ſuch Patience and Conſtancy even unto Death (ſays *Origen*, ſpeaking of the *Apoſtles* propagating the Doctrine of *Chriſt*) is not the *Faſhion* of thoſe who feign things of their own Heads; but is a manifeſt Argument to all candid and ingenuous Readers, that they knew what they writ to be true, when

Adv. Celſ. l. 2. *p.* 65.

when they so cheerfully endur'd so many, and such grievous things, only for the sake of the Son of God, in whom they had believed. No Dangers could affright them, no Threatnings or Torments could baffle them out of their Profession. Therefore when *Celsus* accus'd the *Christians* for a *fearful* sort of Men, and such as lov'd their Carcasses well; *Origen* answers, No such matter, *We can as cheerfully lay down our Bodies to suffer for Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you all can put off his Coat.* And indeed the Gospel did mightily prosper and triumph in the midst of these dreadful Sufferings; Men rationally concluding, That there must be something more than *human* in that Doctrine, for which so many thus deeply ventur'd. So *Tertullian* tells *Scapula* in the Conclusion of his Book: *It's to no purpose to think this Sect will fail, which you will see to be the more built up, the faster 'tis pull'd down: for who is there, that beholding such eminent Patience, cannot but have some Scruples started in his Mind, and be desirous to enquire into the Cause of it; and when he once knows the Truth, be himself mov'd to close with it and embrace it?* Therefore *Julian* the *Apostate*, out of a cursed Policy, refused many times openly to put the *Christians* to death; partly because he envy'd them the *honour* of being *Martyrs*, partly because he saw that they were like *new-mown Grass*, the *oftner* it was cut down, the *thicker* it sprang up again.

Chap. 7.

Lib. 7. *p.* 357.

C. 1. *p.* 72.

Naz. in Jul. Invect. 1. *p.* 72.

I shall add no more concerning this Subject, but the *Testimony* which the very *Enemies* of Christians gave them in this Case. *Julian* the Emperor (whom we so lately mention'd, and who fought against *Christians* with their own *Weapons*, making use of those *Scriptures* which he had study'd while he was amongst them) when the *Christians* complain'd to him of those Oppressions and Injuries which the Governors of *Provinces* laid upon them, made light

Niceph. Eccl. Hist. l. 10. *c.* 24. *to.* 2. *p.* 53.

Part II. of it, and dismissed them with this virulent Sarcasm; *Your Christ* (says he) *has given you a Law, that when you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely, and when oppress'd and injur'd, should not answer again.* And so certainly they did, undergoing all kinds of Miseries, and Death it self, with so *unconcerned* a Mind, that elsewhere he censures them for this very reason, to be acted by the *Spirit* of the *Devil*. Hence *Porphyry*, in a Book that he wrote against the *Christians*, calls their Religion τὸ βάρβαρον τόλμημα, a piece of *barbarous boldness*: *Barbarous*, because so different from the way of Worship amongst the *Greeks*, with whom every thing was barbarous that agreed not with their Principles and Institutions; *Boldness*, because the *Christians* shewed such an undaunted Courage in bearing Miseries and Torments, chusing to die a thousand times rather than to deny *Christ*, and sacrifice to the Gods. For this reason, the Heathen in *M. Felix* stiles the *Christians*, Men of an *undone, furious*, and *desperate Party*; respecting their fearless and resolute Carriage under Sufferings, for so he explains himself presently after: *Is it not a strange Folly and an incredible Boldness? They despise Torments that are present, and yet fear those that are future and uncertain; and while they fear to die after Death, in the mean time they are not afraid to die. So sillily do they flatter themselves, and cajole their Fears by a deceitful hope of some unknown Comforts that shall arise to them.* This, *Arrian* in his Collection of *Epictetus*'s Dissertations, confesses to be true of those, whom (according to *Julian*'s stile) he calls the *Galileans*, that they underwent Torments and Death with a mighty Courage; but which he makes to be the effect only of *use*, and a customary bearing Sufferings. The Emperor *M. Antoninus* confesses also the Matter of Fact, That the *Christians* did thus readily and *resolutely* die, but ascribes it not to Judgment and a rational

Frag. Epist. loc. supra laudat.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 19. p. 220.

M. Fel. p. 7.

Lib. 4. c. 7. p. 500.

Τῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν, *l.* 11. *sect.* 3. *p.* 106.

rational Conſideration, but to *mere Stubbornneſs* and *Obſtinacy*. And in an *Epiſtle* that he wrote to the *Common Council* of *Aſia*, in favour of the *Chriſtians*, whom his Officers there did grievouſly vex and oppreſs, gives them this Teſtimony; That they could have no greater kindneſs done them than to be called in queſtion, and that they had much rather be *put to death* for their Religion, than to have their *Lives* ſpared to them: By which means they became Conquerors, chuſing rather to part with their Lives, than to do what you impoſe upon them. Let me adviſe you (ſays he) who are ready to deſpond with every *Earthquake* that happens to you, to compare your ſelves with them: They in all their dangers are ſecurely confident in their God; while you at ſuch a time *neglect* the Gods, and have little or no regard, either to other Rites, or to the Worſhip of that immortal Deity, but baniſh the *Chriſtians* that worſhip him, and perſecute them unto Death. So forcibly did the Majeſty of Truth extort a Confeſſion from its greateſt Enemies.

Chap. 7. *Apud Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. Lib.* 4. *c.* 13. *p.* 126.

The End of the Second Part.

Primitive Christianity:
OR THE
RELIGION
OF THE
Antient Christians,
IN THE
First AGES of the GOSPEL.

PART III.
Of their Religion as respecting other Men.

CHAP. I.
Of their Justice and Honesty.

Christian Religion admirably provides for Moral Righteousness. Do as you would be done by, *the great Law of Christ: This Rule highly priz'd by* Severus *the Emperor. The first Christians accounted Honesty and an upright Carriage a main part of their Religion. Their Candor and Simplicity in their Words; abhorring Lyes and Mental*

tal Reſervations, though it might ſave their Lives. Their Veracity ſuch, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers againſt all Swearing: Allowed by the greateſt part in weighty Caſes. That they took Oaths, proved from Athanaſius, *and their taking the* Sacramentum Militare. *The Form of the Oath out of* Vegetius. *The ſame expreſly affirmed of the more antient Chriſtians by* Tertullian. *Why refuſing to ſwear by the Emperor's* Genius. *Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion-Table, or the Holy* Goſpels. *Some againſt all Oaths, only to prevent a poſſibility of Perjury. Bearing falſe Witneſs, condemned and ſtrictly puniſhed by the antient Church. A famous Inſtance of Divine Vengeance purſuing three falſe Accuſers. Chriſtians careful in the Conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in Matters of Diſtributive Juſtice; in Commutative Juſtice, avoiding all Fraud and Overreaching. St.* Auguſtine's *Inſtance.* Nicoſtratus *forced to fly, to avoid the Puniſhment of Cheating and Sacrilege. The Chriſtians unjuſtly accuſed of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The Occaſion of it.* Pliny's *Teſtimony of the Honeſty of Chriſtians. Theft and Rapine ſeverely condemned. Chriſtians for doing all the Good they could. Their Care to right and relieve the Oppreſſed. The* Gentiles *charged Chriſtians with Murder, and eating Man's Fleſh. A brief Repreſentation of the ſeveral Anſwers returned to it by the Chriſtian Apologiſts. The true Riſe*

of

of the Charge found to ſpring from the barbarous and inhuman practices of the Gnoſticks, *mentioned by* Irenæus *and* Epiphanius. Chap. 1.

HAving given ſome Account of the Religion of the antient *Chriſtians*, both as it reſpected their *Piety* towards God, and their ſober and vertuous *Carriage* towards *themſelves*; we come in the laſt place to conſider it in reference to their *Carriage* towards *others*, which the *Apoſtle* deſcribes under the Title of *Righteouſneſs:* under which he comprehends all that Duty and Reſpect wherein we ſtand obliged to others; whereof we ſhall conſider theſe following Inſtances: Their *Juſtice* and *Integrity* in Matters of Commerce and Traffick; their *mutual Love* and *Charity* to one another; their *Unity* and *Peaceableneſs*; and their *Submiſſion* and *Subjection* to *Civil* Government.

I begin with the firſt, their **Juſt and Upright Carriage** in their *outward Dealings*. One great Deſign of the *Chriſtian* Law, is to eſtabliſh and ratify that great *Principle*, which is one of the *prime* and *fundamental* Laws of Nature, *To hurt no Man*, and *to render to every one his due*; to teach us to carry our ſelves as becomes us in our Relations towards Men. Next to our Duty towards *God*, the Goſpel obliges us to be *righteous* to *Men*, ſincere and upright in all our Dealings, *not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any matter*; *to put away Lying, and to ſpeak Truth to each other as Fellow-members* of the ſame Chriſtian Brother-hood and Society. It ſettles that *Golden Rule* as the Fundamental Law of all juſt and equitable Commerce, *That all things whatſoever we would that Men ſhould do to us, we ſhould even do ſo to them, this being the Sum of the Law and the Prophets:* than which, as no Rule could have been more

Part III. more *equitable* in it self, so none could possibly have been contrived more *short* and plain, and more accommodate to the common cases of Human Life. Upon the account of these, and such like excellent Precepts, *Alexander Severus*, the *Roman* Emperor, had so great an honour for our *Saviour*, that he was resolved to build a *Temple* to him, and to receive him into the number of their *Gods*: and though he was over-rul'd in this by some, who having consulted the Oracle, told him, That if it were done, all Men would become *Christians*, and the Temples of the Gods would be left naked and empty; yet in his most private *Chappel*, he had the *Image* of *Christ* amongst those of many noble *Heroes*, and *deified* Persons, to whom he paid religious Adoration every Morning; and particularly for this Precept, *That what we would not have done to our selves, we should not do to others* (which his own *Historian* confesses he learn'd either from the *Jews* or *Christians*; but most certainly from the *Christians*, in whose *Mouths* it so often was, and in whose *Gospel* it was so plainly written.) He so highly valued it, that in all publick Punishments he caused it to be proclaimed by a Common *Cryer*; nay, was so hugely fond on't, that he caused it to be written upon the *Walls* of his Palace, and upon all his publick *Buildings*; that, if possible, every room in his Court, and every place in the City might be a silent *Chancery* and Court of Equity.

Lamprid. in vit. Alex. Sev. c. 43. p. 568.

Ibid. c. 29. p. 540.

Ibid. c. 51. p. 577.

So vast a Reverence had the very *Enemies* of Christianity for the *Gospel* upon this account, that it so admirably provides for the advance of Civil Righteousness and Justice amongst Men; which, however it has been slighted by some, even amongst *Christians*, under the Notion of *moral* Principles, yet without it all other *Religion is but vain:* it being a strange piece of Folly, for any to dream of being *godly* without

out

out being *honeſt*; or to think of being a *Diſciple* of the firſt, while a Man is an *Enemy* to the ſecond Table. Sure I am, the *Chriſtians* of old looked upon Honeſty and an upright Carriage, as a conſiderable part of their Religion; and that to ſpeak *Truth*, to keep their *Words*, to perform *Oaths* and *Promiſes*, to act ſincerely in all their *Dealings*, was as ſacred and as dear to them as their Lives and Beings. *Speech* being the great Inſtrument of mutual Commerce and Traffick, ſhall be the firſt Inſtance of their Integrity: They ever uſed the greateſt Candour and Simplicity in expreſſing their Mind to one another, not pretending what was *falſe*, nor concealing what was *true*; *yea*, *yea*, and *nay*, *nay*, was the uſual meaſure of their Tranſactions: a *Lye* they abhorred as *bad* in all, as *monſtrous* in a *Chriſtian*, as directly oppoſite to that *Truth*, to which they had conſigned and delivered up themſelves in Baptiſm, and therefore would not tell one, though it were to *ſave* their Lives. When the Heathens charged them with Folly and Madneſs that they wou'd ſo reſolutely ſuffer, when a parcel of fair Words might make way for them to eſcape; telling them, 'Twas but doing or ſaying as they were bid, and that they might ſecure their Conſciences by *mental* Reſervations: *Tertullian* lets them know, That they rejected the Motion with the higheſt Scorn, as the plain *Artifice* and Invention of the *Devil*. When we are moſt ſeverely examined (ſays *Juſtin Martyr*) we never *deny* our ſelves; counting it *impious* in any thing to diſſemble or deny the Truth, as we know the contrary is acceptable unto God: and though we could (as they told the *Emperors*) when queſtioned, *evade* or *deny* it, yet we ſcorn to *live* upon any terms, by which we muſt be forced to maintain our Lives by *Lyes* and *Falſhood*.

Chap. 1.

Tert. Apol. c. 27. p. 26.

Apol. 1. p. 43.

Ib. Apol. 2. p. 57.

This honeſt and ingenuous Simplicity they practiſed to that exactneſs and accuracy, that for a *Chriſtian*

Part III. *ſtian* to be put to his *Oath*, was accounted a diſparagement to his *Fidelity* and Truth. So *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us: He that approves himſelf and is tried *(ſays he)* in *this* [*i. e.* the *Chriſtian*] way of Piety and Religion, is far from being forward either to *lye* or *ſwear:* For an Oath is a determinative Aſſertion, with a calling God to witneſs for the truth of it. But how ſhall any one that is faithful, ſo far render himſelf *unfaithful*, or unworthy of Belief, as to need an *Oath*, and not rather make the courſe of his Life a Teſtimony to him as firm and poſitive as an *Oath*, and demonſtrate the Truth of his Aſſertion by the conſtant and immutable Tenour of his Words and Actions? It's enough therefore (as he preſently after adds) for every good Man, either by way of Affirmation or Denial to give this Aſſurance, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I ſpeak truly*, to ſatisfy any that apprehend not the certainty of what he ſays: for towards *thoſe that are without*, he ought to have ſuch a Converſation as is moſt worthy of Belief, ſo as no Oath ſhould be required of him; and towards himſelf and thoſe of his Party, to preſerve ſuch an even and equitable Temper of Mind, as is a piece of voluntary Juſtice. This and much more he diſcourſes to the ſame purpoſe.

Stromat. lib. 7. p. 728.

For this and ſome other reaſons, but eſpecially from ſome miſtaken places of *Scripture*, where 'tis ſaid, *Swear not at all*; ſome of the antient Fathers held all taking of an Oath *unlawful*: but beſides that thoſe few that did, were not herein *conſtant* to themſelves, the far greateſt part were of another mind, and underſtood the Prohibition either of ſwearing by *Creatures* (which was the Caſe of the *Jews*, and which our *Saviour* and St. *James* principally aim at) or of *light*, *raſh*, and falſe Swearing. For otherwiſe, that the Primitive *Chriſtians* did not think it

it unlawful to take an *Oath* in ſerious and neceſſary Caſes, is moſt evident. *Athanaſius* ſpeaking of his *Accuſers*, whom he deſir'd might be put to their Oath, tells us, That the beſt way to atteſt the truth of what is ſpoken, is to call God to witneſs; that this *(ſays he)* is the Form of Swearing, which *we Chriſtians* are wont to uſe. And indeed, though we had no other Argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they ſerv'd in the Wars, and frequently bore *Arms* even under the Heathen Emperors; which 'tis evident they could not do, without firſt taking a *Military* Oath to be true to their General, and to *die* rather than *deſert* their Station. And this *Vegetius* an *Heathen Author*, though living in the time of the younger *Valentinian*, expreſly reports of them, That when their Names were entred upon the *Muſter-roll*, they were wont to take an Oath, the particular Form whereof he there ſets down, *viz. That they ſwore by God, Chriſt, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majeſty of the Emperor; which, next to God, is to be loved and honoured by Mankind.* This agrees very well with that account which *Tertullian* had long before given of the *Chriſtians*, when being accuſed by their Enemies of High-Treaſon, amongſt other Reaſons, becauſe they refuſed to ſwear by their *Emperors*; he anſwers, That though they would not ſwear by the Emperor's *Genius*, (their *Genii*, or Tutelar Deities being nothing elſe but *Devils)* yet they did ſwear by the Emperor's *Safety*, a thing more *auguſt* and venerable than all the *Genii* in the World: In the Emperor's they own God's *Inſtitution* and Authority, and would therefore have that to be ſafe which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the matter of a *lawful* Oath; but for the *Dæmons* or *Genii* (ſays he) we uſe *adjurare*, to adjure them, ſo as to *caſt* them out of Men; *non dejurare*, not to Swear by them, and thereby confer the honour

Chap. 1.

Apolog. ad Conſtantium Imper. Tom. 1. p. 528.

De re militar. lib. 1. c. 5. p. 23.

Apol. c. 32. *p.* 28.

Part III. nour of *Divinity* upon them. For the same reason they deny'd to swear by the *Fortune* of the *Emperor*, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a *Deity*, and honour'd with religious Worship.

Thus we see, that they refus'd not to ensure and ratify their Faith by the formality of an Oath, to which that they might add the greater Reverence and Solemnity, they were wont many times to take it at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*, as we find in the Case of *Novatus* and his Followers; for taking their Hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caus'd them to swear by the *Body* and *Blood* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the Artifice of an *Heretick*, to bind his Followers the faster to his Party; St. *Chrysostom* (though himself no good Friend to taking Oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church, and to swear upon the *Communion-Table*, taking the Book of the *Holy Gospels* into their Hands. The same appears from the Case propos'd to *Gregory Nazianzen*, by *Theodoret* Bishop of *Tyana*, and by the instance of *Evagrius*, *Nazianzen*'s *Arch-Deacon* at *Constantinople*, who had it reveal'd to him in a Vision, That some Persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the Person that revealed it, assuring him he would knock off those Fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the *Holy Gospels*, that he would immediately depart; which was accordingly done. And as their Caution was great in *taking* of an Oath, so their care was no less in making of it good; they knew that in this solemn Transaction they did in a more peculiar manner call God as a Witness of what they said, and a Revenger in case of Falshood and the Violation of it: this made them greatly afraid of *Perjury*, which they

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. c. 43. p. 245.

Ad Pop. Antioch. Hom. 15. Tom. 1. p. 178, 179.

Epist. 219. p. 908.

Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 30. p. 686. vid. Annot. Hen. Vales. p. 145. col. 2.

they looked upon as a Sin of a deeper and more than ordinary dye: and one Reason I conceive, why some of the Antients were against all Swearing (and * *Clemens Alexandrinus* and † *Lactantius* confirm me in it) was, because they would not come so much as within the Danger or *Possibility* of Perjury. Such as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful Cases, ‖ St. *Basil* earnestly exhorts to Repentance, and that they would not persist in an obstinate Defence of their Impiety; and for such as are guilty of Perjury, he appointed that they should be suspended and banished the Communion for *eleven Years* together. Chap. 1.

* ὁ μὴ ὢν μηδὲ ὀμνὺς, πολλῷ γε δεῖ ὁπισοῦται. *Loc. supra laudat.*

† *Hic non pejerabit, ne deum ludibrio habeat: sed perjurium ne jurabit quidem: ne quando vel necessitate, vel consuetudine in cadat.* Lactant. Epitom. cap. 6. p. 744.

‖ *Epist. Canon. ad Amphil. can.* 29. *p.* 31. *tom.* 3. *Can.* 64. *p.* 36.

The like Severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of *bearing false Witness*. If any Christian falsly accused another before the Church, (for in those Days they allowed no Appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, *i. e.* suspended the Communion, the only Punishment the *Church* in those days could inflict, according to the Nature of the Crime which he charged upon the other; according to the Decree of the *Illiberine* Council, if he made good his Charge: yet if he had concealed it a considerable time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for *two Years*; the reason probably being, because by this Delay the criminal Person had had opportunity to *infect* others, by propagating his vicious Example to them. But that they might not set the Door open, and give encouragement to busy and malicious Tempers, they ordained, That though the Person should be really guilty of the Crimes he was charged with, yet if the Accuser did not sufficiently prove it *in Conventu Clericorum*, before the *Ecclesiastical Senate*, he should be punished

Conc. Illiber. Can. 74. *p.* 79. *ubi vid. not. Albasp.*

Part III. with a *five Years* Suſpenſion. And becauſe then they had an Honour and Veneration for *Miniſters* above all other Men, they ordained, That whoſoever ſhould falſly accuſe a *Clergy-man*, *Biſhop*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon* with any Crime, which he could not make good, ſhould not be received into Communion, even at the *Hour of Death*. The truth is, they were exceeding tender of any Man's Reputation, readier to add to it than to detract from it, or to faſten any undue Imputation upon him. St. *Baſil* commending *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, has this of him amongſt the reſt: Out of regard (*ſays he*) to the Threatning of our *Lord*, he durſt never call *his Brother*, *Fool*; no Anger, Wrath or Bitterneſs proceeded out of his Mouth; *Slandering* he hated as a Quality greatly oppoſite to a State of Salvation; *Pride* and *Envy* were Strangers to that innocent and guiltleſs Soul; he never *approached the Altar till firſt reconciled to his Brother*: All *falſe* and artificial Speeches, and ſuch as are cunningly contrived for the Slander and Detraction of others, he greatly abominated; well knowing, that every Lye is the *Spawn* and Iſſue of the *Devil*, and that God has threatned *to deſtroy all thoſe that ſpeak Lyes*. And ſo indeed he oftentimes does even in this World, not reſpiting ſuch Perſons to the *Tribunals* of the other World: whereof we meet with this memorable Example. *Narciſſus* Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, a Man of admirable Piety and Holineſs of Life, ſhined with ſo glorious a Luſtre in the Place where he lived, that the Brightneſs of his Converſation offended the ſore Eyes of other Men: Three more eſpecially, not able to bear the eminent Strictneſs of his Life, and being themſelves guilty of very great Enormities, thought to *eſcape* themſelves by accuſing him. Whereupon they laid a very heinous Crime to his Charge, and to beget the greater credit with them that heard it, ſolemnly ratified it with their

Ibid. Can. 75. *p.* 81.

Ad Cleric. Eccleſ. Neocæſar. Ep. 63. *p.* 95. *tom.* 3.

Euſeb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. *c.* 9. *p.* 210.

their *Oaths*: The first, imprecating upon himself that he might be *burnt*, if it were not true: The second, that his Body might be *consumed* by some noisom and pestilent *Disease*: The third, that he might lose his *Sight*. The good Man thought notwithstanding all this, he stood right in the thoughts of all true Christians, who knew his Life to be too clear and unblamable, to be *sullied* with the Breath of such vile Fellows; yet not being able to bear it, he withdrew himself to an *Eremit*'s Life in the Wilderness. But the *restless Eye* of the Divine Vengeance quickly overtook these *perjured* Wretches, and caught them in their own Snares; the first, by a little spark that casually, and whereof no account could be given, happened in his House, was in the Night himself, *Family* and *House* universally *burnt* to Ashes; the second was from Head to Foot over-run and consumed by such a *Disease* as he had wished upon himself; the third, that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable Vengeance of God upon himself, *confessed* the whole Plot and Combination, and testified his Repentance with so deep a Sorrow, that with the Multitude of his Tears he lost his *Sight*. Chap. 1.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their *Words*, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true Conveyances of their Minds; nor were they less careful about the Conduct of their *Actions*, whether of *distributive* or *commutative* Justice. For Matters of *distributive* Justice, so far as it concerns a fair hearing and impartial determining of Tryals and Causes, rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, they had little Opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested with any External *Authority* and Power, till the Empire submitted to *Christianity*, and then we find them executing their Places with the most unbyas'd Uprightness and Integrity. St. *Basil* speaking of

Ad Sophron. Magist. Epist. 332. *p.* 325.

Part. III. of an excellent Person (though he names him not) who was sent to be Governour of *Neocæsarea*, where he was Bishop, but presently undermined and outed by the Accusation of some that could not bear his free and impartial Carriage, and his Temper so extremely opposite to Flattery; says this of him, That he was a most rigid *Observer* of Justice, courteous and easy of Access to them that were *oppressed*; but his Presence severe and terrible to the *Injurious* and Transgressors of the Law: He was the same to *Rich* and *Poor*, equally at leisure for both: Of all Men, he exceedingly abhorred taking Bribes, never favouring any beyond the Equity of his Cause; and which was above all, he was one that designed to reduce *Christianity* to its antient Dignity and Perfection. The same *Nazianzen* reports of his own *Father*, and reckons it one of the excellent Properties for which he accounted him a *Christian*, even before he embraced *Christianity*, that he so exactly observed Justice himself, and so impartially administred it to others, that though he went through very great Offices in the State, yet he made not one Farthing's *Addition* to his own Revenue, though he saw some before his Eyes, who with *Briareus*'s Hands laid hold upon the publick Treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In Laud. Patr. Orat. 19. *p.* 290.

In Matters of *commutative* Justice, and ordinary Transaction between Man and Man, they observed the Rule, *To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves*: They took no Advantage of any Man's *Ignorance* or Unskilfulness, so as to grasp that Commodity at a far *under-rate*, of which they knew the *Seller* did not understand the true Price and Value; and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a Price. To this purpose * St. *Augustine* tells us, he knew a Man (probably he means *himself*, though

* *De Trin. lib.* 13. *c.* 3. *tom.* 3. *col.* 407.

out

out of Modesty he conceals it) who having a *Book* offered him to be sold by one that understood not the *Price* of it, at a very small under-rate, took the Book, but gave him the *full* Price according to its just Rate and Value, which was a great deal more than the Seller asked for it. And the truth is, in such Cases Advantage cannot honestly be taken of Men's Weakness or Mistake; because no Man, if he understood the true Worth and Value of his Commodity, can be supposed willing to part with it at a too under-rate. And if they were thus far from craftily *over-reaching*, much more from secretly or openly *invading* of what was another's Right and Property; no cheating or couzenage, no acts of Dishonesty and Deceit were allowed, or practised amongst them; or if any such were discovered, they were immediately protested against by the whole Soceity of Christians. *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* giving *Cyprian* an account of *Novatus* the Heretick and his Companions, tells him of one *Nicostratus*, that not only cheated his *Lady* and *Patroness*, whose Estate and Revenues he managed, but carried away a great part of the Treasures of the Church (whereof he was *chief Deacon*) the Portion and Maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans; (a Crime, says he, reserved for perpetual Punishment, *i. e.* for the Judgment of God in the other World, being too great for any in this) whereupon he was forced to fly from *Rome* into *Africk*, to avoid the Shame and Prosecution of his Rapine and Sacrilege: though when he came there, they did not only *refuse* to admit him into Communion, but openly *exposed* the Wickedness of him and his Confederates to the Abhorrency of all Men. By which may appear the Falsity of that Charge of *Sacrilege* which the *Gentiles* brought against the *Christians*: to which, though certainly it primarily respected their declared Enmity against the *idolatrous Temples* and Worship of the *Heathens*,

Chap. 1.

Epist. 48. *p.* 62. *vid. Resp. Cyprian. Ep. sequent.*

Part III. yet *Tertullian* answers: You look upon us (says he) as *sacrilegious* Persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of *Wrong* or *Injury*, of any *Rapine* and *Violence*; much less of *Sacrilege* and *Impiety*. No, they are your *own* Party, that swear by and worship your Gods, and yet *rob* their Temples; that are no *Christians*, and yet are found to be *sacrilegious*. And afterwards he adds this further Vindication of them: As for us (says he) we deny not any *Pledg* that's left with us, we *adulterate* no Man's Marriage-Bed, we piously *educate* and train up Orphans, and relieve the Necessities of the indigent, and *render no Man Evil for Evil*. If there be any that dissemble our Religion, let them look to't, we *disown* them for being of our Party: Why should we be worse thought of for others Faults? Or why should a Christian answer for any thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no Man in so long a time has proved to be cruel or incestuous? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest *Innocency*, *Honesty*, *Justice*, *Modesty*; for our *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, and our *Piety* to the Living God. And that these were not a parcel of good Words which the *Christians* spoke in their own behalf, will appear if we consider the Testimony which *Pliny* (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them: for being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan* to give him an Account of the *Christians*, he tells him, That after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounced *Christianity*, he found this to be the *greatest Fault that they were guilty of, that they used harmlesly to meet to worship Christ, and at those Meetings to bind themselves by a Sacrament [or an Oath] that they would not do any Wickedness, that they might be firmlier obliged not to commit Theft, Robberies, Adulteries, not to falsify their Words, or to deny any thing wherewith they were intrusted, when 'twas required of them.*

Ad Scap. 2. p. 69.

Ib. c. 4. 7. 1.

Lib. 10. ep. 97. p. 290.

Gregory

Chap. 1.

Gregory Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, in a *Canonical* Epistle which he wrote to rectify several Disorders and Irregularities which had happened amongst the *Christians* of those Parts, by reason of the Inroads and Devastations which the *Goths* and other *barbarous* Nations had made amongst them; does amongst other things especially take notice, how *uncomely* in it self, how *unsuitable* to Christians it is to *covet*, and to grasp what is *another* Man's; how inhuman to *spoil* the oppressed, and to enrich our selves by the Blood and Ruines of our miserable Brethren. And whereas some might be apt to plead, They did not *steal*, but only take up what they found, he tells them this Excuse would not serve the Turn; that whatever they had found of their *Neighbours*, nay, though it were their *Enemies*, they were bound to *restore* it, much more to their *Brethren*, who were Fellow-Sufferers with them in the same Condition. Others thought it warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such *deep Losers themselves*. But this (he tells them) is to *justify* one Wickedness with another; and because the *Goths* had been Enemies to them, they would become *Goths* and *Barbarians* unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing *Injuries* to others; they were ready to do them all the *Right*, all the *Kindness* that lay in their power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the Power and Violence of those that were too mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the *Synod of Sardis* took notice, that some Bishops used to go to Court upon By-errands, and private Designs of their own, they ordained, That no Bishop should go to Court, unless either immediately summoned by the *Emperor*'s Letters, or that their Assistance was required to help the *oppressed*, to right *Widows* and *Orphans*, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent

Can. 2,3,4, 5. *p.* 119, 120.

Can. 7, 8.

Part III. and mercileſs Oppreſſors; and that in theſe Caſes they ſhould be ready (either by *themſelves*, or ſome *deputed* by them) to preſent their Petitions, to plead their Cauſe, and to lend them all the Aſſiſtance they were able to afford.

I ſhould not in this place have taken any notice how far the antient Chriſtians were from *Murder*, and offering violence to any Man's *Life*, but that it was a common *Charge* brought againſt them by the *Gentiles*, That they uſed to *kill* and *devour* an Infant at their *Chriſtian* Meetings, eſpecially when any was firſt to be initiated into their Aſſemblies. The Story is thus dreſſed up by the acute Heathen in *M. Felix*: *An Infant being covered all over with Meal, (the better to deceive the unwary) is ſet before him that is to be initiated and taken in; he, ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many ſecret and mortal Wounds; whereupon they greedily lick up the Blood, and ravenouſly tear off and ſnatch away the ſeveral Parts of it. And with this Sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conſcience of ſo great a Villany they are mutually obliged to ſilence: Such Sacred Rites as theſe being more horrid and barbarous than the higheſt Sacrileges in the World.* To this monſtrous and horrid Charge, the *Chriſtians* returned theſe Anſwers, That they appealed to the common *Faith* of Mankind, whether they could really believe them to be guilty of theſe things, ſo *abhorrent* to all the Principles of Human Nature, and to the Chriſtians *known* Principles and Practices in all other things; that they ſhould meaſure the *Chriſtians* by themſelves, and if they themſelves could not be guilty of ſuch things, they ſhould not ſuſpect it by the *Chriſtians*, who were endued with the ſame Principles of *Humanity* with other Men: That they were ſo far from being Friends to *Murder* or Man-ſlaughter, that

M. Fæl. p. 8. vid. Tert. Ap. c. 9. p. 9.

Tert. Ap. c. 9. p. 8. M. Fæl. p. 25.

Athenag. leg. pro Chriſtian. p. 38. B. M. Fæl. ib.

that they held it unlawful to be present at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where Mens Lives were so wantonly sacrificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People: That they accounted it Murder for any Woman, by evil Arts, to procure *Abortion*, to stifle the *Embryo*, to kill a Child in a manner before it be alive; it being much at one to *hinder* Life, as to *take it away*, to kill a Man, or destroy what *would be* one, seeing he truly destroys the *Fruit* that kills it in the *Seed*: That it was not likely they should delight in *Man's* Blood, who never tasted any Blood at all, *abstaining from things strangled, and from Blood.* And that the very *Heathens* themselves confessed this, when amongst the several *Arts* they used to discover whether Men were *Christians*, they used to offer them *Bladders* full of *Blood*, knowing that they held it unlawful to *taste* any; and therefore it was mightily improbable they should thirst after *human* Blood, who abhorred even the Blood of *Beasts*. That they heartily believed the *Resurrection* of the Dead; and therefore would not make themselves the *Sepulchers* of those Bodies which were to *rise* again, and feed upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which were to have no Resurrection: That the truth was, if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of the *Gentiles* themselves, amongst whom these things were daily *allowed* and *practised*; that *Saturn* (one of their chief Deities) did not only expose, but *eat* his own Children; to him, Infants in *Africk* were offered in *Sacrifice* by their own Parents; a Custom that openly continued till the Proconsulship of *Tiberius*, which though he abolished, yet it continued still in Corners in *Tertullian's* Days. To his Son *Jupiter* they offered *human* Sacrifices, even in *Rome* it self, and that even to the time of *M. Fælix*, as he himself testifies; which is no more than what *Porphyry* himself (after he had reckoned up in how many

Chap. 1.

Athenag. ib. M. Fæl. ib. Tert. ib. p. 5.

M. Fæl. p. 26. Tert. ib. p. 10.

Athenag. ib.

Ibid.

De Abst. l. 2. sect. 56. p. 95.

Parts

Part III. Parts of the World *human* Sacrifices were in use) confesses was done at *Rome* in the Feast of *Jupiter Latialis* even in his time. Many other Instances of such barbarous Practices are there produced by those two *Apologists*, which they urge with great advantage upon their Adversaries, whom they challenged to make any such thing good against them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin to be regularly settled, but their Principles herein were every where confirmed by the *Canons* of the Church, either private or publick. The Woman that industriously made her self *miscarry*, was adjudged to be guilty of *Murder*, and condemned to the same Punishment, a *ten Years Penance*; which was adjudged to be the Case of any that brought forth upon the way, and *exposed* her Infant. By the Law of the State, made by the Emperor *Valentinian*, whosoever, whether Man or Woman, *killed* an Infant, was to be subject to the same capital Punishment as if he had killed an *adult* Person; which may very well be understood even of *Infants* killed in the *Womb*, the Punishment whereof was formerly for the most part no more than Banishment. He that was guilty of wilful Murder, was, by St. *Basil*'s Rule, to undergo a *twenty Years Penance* before he was admitted to the Sacrament; though by several Passages in *Tertullian*, it appears that *Homicides* in his time were more severely treated by the Church; for they were not only bound to a perpetual Penance, but were not *absolved* at Death. But this Severity shortly after began to relax, and such Persons, though obliged to Acts of Repentance all their Life, yet at Death were absolved and admitted to Communion, as is expresly provided by the Decree of the *Ancyran* Council.

Basil. ep. Can. Con. 2. p. 22.
Ib. Can. 33. p. 32.
Cod. Theod. l. 9. tit. 14. l. 1.
Can. 56. p. 36.
Can. 22.

Thus clear did the Christians all along stand from any just Suspicion of that gross piece of *Inhumanity* which

which their Enemies so confidently charged upon them. As for the *Rise* and Occasion of this malicious Charge, it was doubtless of the same Growth with that of their *incestuous Mixtures* (spoken of before) both springing from the abominable Practices of some *filthy* Hereticks, who sheltered themselves under the *name* of Christians; *Epiphanius* particularly reporting of the *Gnosticks* what the Heathens generally charged upon the Christians: for he tells us of them, That at their Meetings they were wont to take an *Infant* begotten in their *promiscuous* Mixtures, and beating it in a *Mortar*, to season it with *Hony* and *Pepper*, and some other Spices and Perfumes, to make it *palatable*, and then, like *Swine* or *Dogs*, to devour it; and after to conclude all with Prayer: And this they accounted their *perfect Passover*. I am not ignorant that a learned Man will by no means believe, that any of the antient *Hereticks* did ever arrive to so much *Barbarousness* and Inhumanity, as to be guilty of such things, and conceives them to have been *feigned* merely out of hatred to those pestilent Hereticks; but there's little reason to suspect the truth of it, *Epiphanius* assuring us, That he had the account that he gives, from the Mouths of the *Gnosticks* themselves; and that many of the *Women* who were deceived into those abominable Errors, did not only discover these things to him, but that he himself in his younger Years, while he was in *Egypt*, had been assaulted by them, and by all the Arts of Flattery and Persuasion, of Wantonness and Immodesty, had been set upon to join himself to them. And certainly, 'tis not imaginable, that a Person so venerable for Learning and Piety, as *Epiphanius* was, should impose upon us by feigning so gross and notorious a Falshood. Besides, whoever reads *Irenæus*, in whose time these Heresies were most rife and predominant, and considers the account that he gives

Chap. 1.

Hær. 26. *p.* 43. *vid. de Phyrg. seu Quintilian. Hær.* 48. *p.* 181. *de Montanist. Zon. & Balsam. in Can.* 7. *Conc. Const. Desid. Heral. Not. ad M. Fæl. p.* 76.

Ibid. p. 48.

Part III. gives of them, which he mainly received from the Persons of their own Party, after they were returned back to the Church; will see little reason either to think any Wickedness *too great* for them to boggle at, or to doubt of the Truth of what he reports concerning them.

CHAP. II.

Of their Admirable Love and Charity.

The excellent Temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoins Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all Brethren; *but Christians more especially. Their mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Error to Truth and Vertue. This the Matter of their daily Prayer, and most serious Endeavours, even towards their greatest Enemies.* Pamphilus's *Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile* Phænicians *to Christianity. The famous Story of St.* John's *hazarding himself for the regaining a young Man debauched by bad Companions.* Monica's *Care and Sollicitude about St.* Augustine. *Some that have sold themselves for Slaves, that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledg of their Religion.*

Religion. Their Charity as it respected the Necessities of the outward Life: This noted in several Instances of Charity. Their liberal providing for the Poor. The Bounty of particular Persons: Divers Instances of it. The immense Charity of Epiphanius. *Exemplary Vengeance upon some that abused it. The Poor accounted the Treasure and Ornaments of the Church: represented in the Case of* Laurentius *the Deacon, and a Story related by* Palladius. *Their visiting and assisting the Sick in their own Persons: eminently noted in the Empress* Placilla, *and the Lady* Fabiola. *The Christians Care of their Brethren in a great Plague at* Alexandria. *Persons appointed on purpose to cure and attend the Sick. The* Parabolani, *who; their Office and Number. Redemption of Captives. Great Sums contributed by* Cyprian *and his People for it. Church-Plate sold to redeem Christians, nay, captived Enemies. Christians embondaging themselves to redeem others. The strange Charity of* Paulinus *Bishop of* Nola, *making himself a Slave to ransom a poor Widow's Son. Their Care about the Bodies of the Dead. Decent Burial very fit and desirable. A piece of Piety remarkable in the Christians of those Times. Their abstaining from the common Custom of burning the Dead, as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon their Funerals in embalming, intombing,* &c. *The* Copiotæ, *who. What their Office and Order. The* Decani, *or Deans in the Church of* Con-

Chap. 2.

Constantinople: *Their Number and Duty. Their providing fit Places of Sepulture. Their* Cœmeteria, *or Burying-places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches, when brought in, and to whom first granted. Their* Cœmeteria *under ground. What kind of Places they were. The great Number, and vast Capacities of them. A particular Account of one out of* Baronius, *discovered in his Time. How the Christians were enabled to all these Acts of Charity. At first all in common: After by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. This Charity of Christians largely attested by* Julian *and* Lucian. *Their Love and Charity universal. Doing good to Enemies, an Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly acknowledged by* Julian *himself. The whole summed up in an elegant Discourse of* Lactantius, *concerning Mercy and Charity.*

THAT the *Christian* Religion was immediately designed to improve and perfect the Principles of human Nature, appears as from many other Instances of it, so especially from this, That it so strictly enjoins, cherishes and promotes that natural *Kindness* and *Compassion*, which is one of the prime and essentiall Inclinations of Mankind. Wherever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us Humble, Affable, Courteous and Charitable, ready and disposed to every *good Work*, prompt

prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindneſs; it *files* off the Ruggedneſs of Mens Natures, baniſhes a rude, churliſh, and *Phariſaical* Temper, and infuſes a more calm and treatable Diſpoſition. It commands us to *live and love as Brethren, to love without Hypocriſy, to have fervent Charity amongſt our ſelves, and to be kindly affectionated one towards another.* It lays the Sum of our Duty towards others in this, *To love our Neighbour as our ſelves.* This our Saviour ſeems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own ſolemn Sanction: *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you alſo love one anothen.* And then makes this the great viſible *Badg* of all thoſe who are truly Chriſtians: *By this ſhall all Men know that you are my Diſciples, if you have love one to another.* Chap. 2.

And ſo indeed it was in thoſe firſt and beſt Ages of Religion; for no ſooner did the Goſpel fly abroad into the *World*, but the Love and Charity of Chriſtians became notorious, even to a *Proverb*; the Heathens taking notice of the Chriſtians of thoſe times with this particular Remark, *See how theſe Chriſtians love one another!* They were then united in the moſt happy *Fraternity* (a Word much uſed by *Chriſtians* in thoſe Days, and objected againſt them by the *Heathens*) they lived as *Brethren*, and accounted themſelves ſuch, not only as being ſprung from one common Parent (for in this reſpect that they had Nature for their common *Mother*, they acknowledg the very *Heathens* to be *Brethren*, though otherwiſe little deſerving the name of *Men*) but upon much higher Accounts, *viz.* that they had one and the ſame God for their *Father*, *drank* all of the ſame Spirit of Holineſs, were brought out of the ſame *Womb* of Darkneſs and Ignorance into the ſame

Tert. Ap. c. 39. *p.* 31.

Id. ib. M. Fæl. p. 26.

Part III. same Light of Truth, that they were Partakers of the same Faith, and Co-heirs of the same Hope: This *Lucian* himself confesses of them, and that it was one of the great Principles that their Master instilled into them, That they should all become *Brethren* after once they had thrown off the Religion of the *Gentiles*, and had embraced the Worship of their great *crucified* Master, and given up themselves to live according to his Laws. The truth is, so ready, entire, and constant was their Kindness and Familiarity, that the Heathens accused them for having *privy* Marks upon their Bodies, whereby they fell in love with each other at first sight. Indeed they never met but they embraced one another with all the Demonstrations of a hearty and sincere Affection, saluting each other with an *holy Kiss*, not only in their own Houses, but at their religious Assemblies, as a Badg and Bond of that Christian Fellowship and Communion that was maintained amongst them.

De mort. Peregrin. p. 764. tom. 2.

M. Fæl. ib. & p. 7.

But the Love and Kindness of those *Christians* of old did not lie only in a smooth complimental Carriage, or in a parcel of good Words, *Depart in Peace, be you warmed or filled*; but in the real Exercises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two great Objects of *Charity* are the Good of Mens *Souls*, and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happiness; we shall find, that the Primitive Christians were highly eminent and exemplary for both these. The Soul being of a much higher and nobler Nature, and consequently infinitely more precious and valuable than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely careful and sollicitous to save Mens Souls, *to recover them out of the Snare of the Devil*, and the Paths of Ruin, by making them *Christians*, and bringing them over to the *Knowledg of the Truth*; for this they prayed daily and earnestly. We Christians (says *Cyprian*

to the *Proconsul*) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth, and pray to him Night and Day, not only for our selves, but for all Men, and for the Safety of the Emperors themselves. From this, no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could discourage them. *Justin Martyr* tells the *Jews*, That they prayed for them, and all others that were unjustly their Enemies, that repenting of their Wickednesses, and ceasing to *blaspheme Christ Jesus*, who by the Greatness of his Works, the Uncontrolableness of the Miracles performed in his Name, the Excellency of his Doctrines, and the Clearness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him, appeared to be altogether innocent and unblameable; and that rather believing in him, they might together with *Christians* be saved by him at his second glorious Coming, and not be condemned by him to everlasting Flames. We pray for you (says he) that *Christ* would have mercy upon you; for he has taught us to *pray for our Enemies*, to *love* them, and be *merciful* to them. And afterwards, when he had reckoned up all those wicked and malicious Artifices which the *Jews* had used both against *Christ* and *Christians*; yet notwithstanding all this (says he) we are so far from hating either you, or those who at your Suggestion believe these things of us, that we *pray* that all of you may repent, and obtain Mercy from God, the gracious and compassionate Parent of the World. The *Gnosticks* were the greatest Scandal that ever was to *Christianity*, and the occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the Christians, and yet see how *Irenæus* treats them! We pray for them (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that *Christ may be*

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Passio Cyp. vit. ejus annex. p. 17.

Dial. cum Tryph. p. 254.

Ib. p. 323.

Ib. p. 333.

Adv. Hær. l. 3. *c.* 46. *p.* 314.

Part III. *formed in them*, and that they may *know the only true God*, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better purpose than they think they love themselves: For our Love is true and wholesom (if they will receive it) like a *sharp* Plaister indeed, but it will eat away the proud Flesh, take down the Swelling and Vanity of their Minds; for which cause we will not cease by all means to apply it to them. The same *Origen* tells *Celsus*, That though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* turned their backs upon the Doctrine of *Christ*, and charged them for being *Impostors* and Deceivers; yet they would not give over thus *honestly* to deceive Men, to make them of loose Persons to become sober and temperate, or to bring them on towards it; of dishonest, to make them righteous; of unwise, to make them prudent, at least to bring them into the way to these things; of fearful timorous, to render them hearty and courageous, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does *Cyprian* beg of the Proconsul *Demetrian* and the *Gentiles* to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Counsels and Assistance which the *Christians* offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them; that they returned Kindness for Hatred, and by the Miseries they endured, shewed to them the Way to Heaven; that now was the time to make their peace with God, and to secure Salvation; that there was *no Place for Repentance* on t'other side the Grave, the *Stations* of the other World being fixed and unchangeable; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoice with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

Lib. 2. *P.* 110.

Ad Demet. P. 204.

In pursuance of this Design, they spared neither *Pains* nor *Cost*, that they might instruct Men in the way

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way to Heaven. 'Tis said of *Pamphilus* the *Martyr*, That amongst other Instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow *Bibles* upon all that were willing to read; for which purpose he had always great numbers of those Holy Volumes by him, that as occasion served he might distribute and bestow them: By these means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purses could not otherwise reach to the price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those Days than they are since *Printing* came into the World. *Hier. adv. Ruffin. tom. 2. p. 199. & Euseb.*

We find St. *Chrysostom* so zealous for converting the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, that for this very end he maintained many *Presbyters* and *Monks* in *Phœnicia*, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the Assistance of pious and well-disposed Persons, whose only Work it was to *catechize* and instruct the *Heathens* in the Principles of the *Christian* Faith; and that the Business might succeed more effectually, he procured a Law from the Emperor *Arcadius*, (yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*) directed to *Eutychian*, *Prefect* of the *East*, That the Pagan *Temples* should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole matter of the *Gentile* Superstition might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law, great Mutinies were raised by the Country-People, many of the *Monks* wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartned to proceed in the Business (these doubtless being *those* very *Monks* against whom *Libanius* so severely declaims, for so mercilessly destroying the Pagan Temples.) Whereupon *Chrysostom* (who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a Christian and Invincible Patience, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a Work; tells them, That God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life; and promises them (though his *Incomes* at this time were very small) that their

Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 29. p. 229.

Lib. 16. tit. 10. de Pag. Sacrif. & Temp. l. 17.

Orat. de Temp. p. 10.

Ep. 123. to. 4. p. 756.

Part III. former Pensions should be paid them, and all things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much Care and Sollicitude the good Man's Mind was filled about this Business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another Person whom he had imploy'd about this Affair. Nor did they in those times regard *Ease* or *Safety* any more than they did Cost and Charges in this matter, exposing themselves to any Dangers that they might do good to the Souls of Men.

Ad. Russin. Presbyt. ep. 126. p. 763.

I might easily shew, That this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their eternal Ruin. But that famous Story of St. *John* the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the *sum* of which is this: Coming to a place near *Ephesus*, in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a *Youth* of a comely Shape and pregnant Parts, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the *Bishop* of the Place with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again;) *I commend this Person to thee, to be looked to with all Care and Diligence, and that in the Presence of Christ and the Church.* The Bishop undertook the Charge, received the Young Man into his House, instructed him, and at last *baptized* him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but the Young Man making an ill Use of his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by whose Arts and Snares he was seduced into Ways of Riot and Wickedness: till despairing of all hope of Pardon from God, he let loose the Reins to all manner of Exorbitancy; and agreeing with his Confederates, they combined themselves into a Society of Highway-men, and made him their *Captain*, who quickly became as far beyond the rest in Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in Power and Authority.

Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 23. p. 92.

thority St. *John* upon occasion returning some while after to the same Place, after he had dispatched his other Business, required from the Bishop the *Pledg* he had left with him: who wondring and not knowing what he meant; *I mean* (said St. *John*) *the Young Man, 'tis the Soul of my Brother that I require.* The old Man with a dejected Look, and Tears in his Eyes, answered, *He's dead:* And being demanded by what kind of Death? answered, *He's dead to God*; for, alas! he's become a *Villain*, and instead of the Church, is fled with his Companions to the Mountains to be a Thief and a Robber. The Apostle renting his Clothes, and bewailing that he had so ill betrusted his Brother's Soul, immediately called for a Horse and a Guide, and made haste to the Mountains; where being taken by those that stood *sentinel*, he begged to be brought before their *Captain*, who stood ready armed some way off; but as soon as he perceived 'twas St. *John* that was coming towards him, he began to be ashamed, and to run as fast as he could. The Apostle not regarding his own Age and Weakness, followed after with all his might; and when his Legs could not overtake him, he sent these passionate Exclamations after him; *Why, O my Son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father? Take pity of me, and fear not, there is yet hope of Salvation for thee. I will undertake with Christ for thee; if need be, I will freely undergo death for thee, as our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ransom thine: only stay and believe me, for I am sent by Christ.* With that he staid, and with a dejected Look, throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and dissolved into Tears; he embraced the aged *Apostle* with all possible Expressions of Sorrow and Lamentation, as if again *baptized* with his own Tears. St. *John* assured him, he had obtained his pardon of *Christ*, and having fasted and prayed with

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Part III. him and for him, and with all the Arts of Consolation refreshed his shattered and disconsolate *Mind*, brought him into, and restored him to the Church.

This Story, though somewhat long, I was the willinger to produce, both because so remarkable in it self, and so great a Testimony of that mighty *Tenderness* and Compassion which they had for the Souls of Men; for whose sake they thought they could never *do*, never venture far enough. St. *Augustine* tells us, what infinite pains his Mother *Monica* took about the Conversion of her Husband *Patricius*; how unweariedly she sought to endear her self to him, by all the Arts of a meek, prudent, and sober Carriage; how submissively she complied with his rigorous and untoward Humours, how diligently she watched the aptest times of Insinuation, never leaving, till at last she gained him over to the Faith. Nor was her Care and Sollicitude less for her Son *Augustine*, who being hurried away with the Lewdnesses of Youth, and intangled with the Impieties of the *Manichean* Heresy, was the hourly Subject of her Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Counsels and Intreaties, implored the help and assistances of good Men, and importuned Heaven for the Success of all; not being able to gain any quiet to her Mind, till St. *Ambrose* (with whom she had oft advised about it) sent her away with this Assurance, *That it was not possible that a Child of so many tears should perish.* No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her Spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Himself tell us, That discoursing with her alone some few days before her Death, concerning the State of the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke off with this Farewel: *For my part, Son, I have now no further Hopes or Pleasures in this World; there was but one thing for which I desired to live, that I might*

Confess. l. 9. c. 9. p. 155. tom. 1.

Ib. c. 10.

might ſee thee a Catholick Chriſtian before I died: this my Good God has abundantly bleſſed me with, having lee me ſee thee deſpiſing the Felicities of this Life, and entred into his Family and Service; ſo that what do I make any longer here? Nay, ſo great a Zeal had they for the good of Souls in thoſe Days, That many did not ſtick to engage themſelves in *temporal* Slavery, for no other end but to deliver others from *Spiritual* Bondage. Thus *Serapion*, called *Sindonites* (becauſe he had never wore more than one poor Linen Garment) one of the Primitive *Aſceticks*, ſold himſelf to a *Gentile Player*, that ſerved the Theatre; with whom he lived and underwent the meaneſt Offices, till he had converted him, his Wife, and whole Family to Chriſtianity, who upon their Baptiſm reſtored him to his Liberty: whereupon he freely returned them back the *Mony* which he had received as the Price of his Servitude, which by mutual Conſent was given to the Poor. Coming afterwards to *Lacedæmon*, and hearing that a principal Perſon of the City, a very good Man otherwiſe, was infected with the *Manichean* Hereſy; one of the firſt things he did, was to inſinuate himſelf into his Family, ſelling himſelf to be his Slave; in which Condition he remained for two Years together, till he had brought his Maſter and his whole Family off from that pernicious Hereſy, and reſtored them to the Church; who did not only bleſs God for it, but treated him not as a *Servant*, but with that Kindneſs and Reverence that is due to a *Brother*, and a *Father*. This was the good Spirit and *Genius* of thoſe Days; they intirely ſtudied and deſigned the Happineſs of Men, were willing and deſirous freely to impart the Treaſurics of the Goſpel, and wiſhed, That in that reſpect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themſelves. So far were they from that malicious

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Pallad. Hiſt. Lauſ. c. 83. in vit. Serap. p. 182.

Part III. cious Imputation which *Celsus* fastned upon them, That if all Men would become Christians, they would not admit it! To which *Origen* flatly returns the *Lye*; and tells him, the Falseness of it might appear from this, That Christians (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole World; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down, not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any designs of *Gain* or Interest to themselves, was plain, because they often refused to receive *necessary* Accommodations from others; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present Turn, whenas far greater Liberalities have been offered to them. Nay, some of the antient *Canons* expresly require, That no Man, who has either *Hereticks* or *Infidels* in his Family, shall be admitted to the Order either of *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon*, who has not first converted those Persons to the true Christian Faith.

Orig. contr. Cels. l. 3. *p.* 116.

Conc. Car. 3. *Can.* 1.

Having seen what Kindness and Charity they expressed to Mens *Souls*, we come next to that which respected their *Bodies*, and the Necessities of the outward Life: this they shewed in several Instances; we shall consider some of the most material. In the first place, they took special care to provide for the *Poor*, and such as were unable to help themselves: This, *Cyprian* in his Retirement gave especially in charge to the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* of his Church, that by all means they should mind the Poor, and furnish them with whatever was necessary for them. *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, testifies of the Church of *Rome*, That they did not only eminently provide for their own Poor, but with great Liberality administer to the Necessities of other Churches, plentifully relieving whatever indigent Brethren came to them; or wherever

Ep. 5. *p.* 13.

Euf. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. *c.* 23. *p.* 145.

wherever they were, though at the greatest distance from them. And of the Church of *Antioch*, *Chrysostom* tells us, That in his time, though the Revenues of it were but small, yet besides its *Clergy*, besides *Strangers*, *Lepers*, and such as were in *Bonds*, it daily maintained above *three thousand* Widows and Maids. Indeed the Bounty of those Times was almost incredible. St. *Cyprian*, upon his turning Christian, sold his Estate to relieve the Wants of others; and could not be restrained from it, either by the Persuasions of others, or the Considerations of what he might be reduced to himself. After his entrance upon the Ministry, his Doors were open to all that came; from whom no Widow ever returned empty: To any that were Blind, he would be their Guide to direct them; that were Lame, he was ready to lend his Assistance to support them; none were oppressed by Might, but he was ready to defend them. *Cæsarius*, St. *Basil*'s Brother, made only this short *Will* when he died; *I will that all my Estate be given to the Poor.* *Nazianzen* reports of his Father, That he was so kind to the Poor, that he did not only bestow the *Surplusage* of his Estate upon them, but even part of what was reserv'd for *necessary* uses: of his Mother, That one Ocean of Wealth would not have filled her unsatisfied desire of doing Good; and that he had often heard her say, That if it were lawful, she could willingly have sold her *Self* and *Children*, to have expended the Price upon the Uses of the Poor: and of his Sister *Gorgonia*, that she was immensly liberal; *Job*-like, her Gate was open to every Stranger; she was *Eyes* to the *Blind*, *Feet* to the *Lame*, and a *Mother* to *Orphans*; her Estate was as common to the Poor, and as much at their need, as every one's is to himself; dispersing and scattering abroad, and according to the Counsel of our *Saviour*, *laying up her Treasure in Heaven.*

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Hom. 67. in Matth. p. 586.

Vit. ejus per Paul. Diac. p. 11, 12.

Basil. ad Sophron. ep. 84. p. 156. tom. 3. Orat. 19. p. 298.

Ibid. p. 299.

They

Part III. They gave not only *according to*, but *beyond* their Ability; trusting to the Goodness and Fidelity of Heaven to supply what *wanted*, which many times made the Return, with Overplus, by ways uncommon and extraordinary. *Sozomen* relates of *Epiphanius* Bishop of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*, That having spent all his own Estate in pious and charitable Uses, in relieving the Needy, and such as were by Ship-wreck and the Mercy of the Sea, cast upon the Coast; he freely dispensed and distributed the Goods and Treasures of his Church (which by the Bounty of charitable Persons from all Parts, who thought they could not better lodg their Estates, than in the hands of so good a Man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a hand, that the *Steward* or Guardian of the Church, finding its Stock begin to grow very low, with some resentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed: All which notwithstanding, he remitted nothing of his accustomed Bounty to the Poor. At length, all being spent, a *Stranger* on a sudden comes into the Steward's Lodgings, and delivers into his hands a great *Purse* of *Gold*, without any discovery either who it was that *brought* it, or who 'twas that *sent* it. And indeed so vast and universal was the Charity of this good Man, that it sometimes made him liable to be *imposed* upon by crafty and designing Persons, whereof the *Historian* in the same place, gives this remarkable Instance: A couple of Beggars meeting *Epiphanius*, and knowing the Charitableness of his Temper, to draw the greater Alms from him, agreed to put this Trick upon him. One of them lies along upon the Ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him, passionately bewailed the Death of his Companion and his own Poverty, not able to give him Burial. *Epiphanius* pitied the Man, persuaded him to

H. Eccl. lib. 7. c. 27. p. 749.

to bear his Loss patiently, and not to expect that his Companion should in this World rise any more, bid him take care for his Burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of sight, but the Beggar comes to his Companion, jogs him with his Foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the Cheat: *Rise* (said he) *and with what we have got, let's be merry and jolly to day.* But alas! the *Comedy* was turn'd into a *tragick Scene*; the Man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his cries or stirring: which his Companion no sooner perceived, but with all haste makes after the *Bishop*, cries and tears his Hair, confesses the Cheat, and begs that his Companion might be restored to Life; but all in vain. The Bishop bids him to be content, and tells him, that God would not undo what he had done: *Leaving a fair warning to Men* (says the *Historian*) *that the great God, who sees and hears all things, reckons those mockeries that are put upon his Servants, as if done to himself.* But this only upon occasion of that great Charity which they then upon all occasions extended to the Poor. The truth is, they then looked upon the Poor as the *Treasure* and *Ornament* of the Church, by whom, as by Bills of Exchange, they returned their Estates into the other World. When *Decius* the *Emperor*, demanded of *Laurentius* the *Deacon* of the Church of *Rome*, the Church's Treasures, he promised, after three days, to produce them; in which time, having gathered together the *Blind* and the *Lame*, the *Infirm*, and the *Maim*, at the time appointed, he brought them into the Palace; and when the *Emperor* asked for the *Treasures* he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his Company: *Behold!* (said he) *these are the Treasures of the Church, those Eternal Treasures which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed*

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Act. Laurent. apud Sur. ad diem 10 Aug. Tom. 4. vid. Ambr. Offic. lib. 2. c. 28. Tom. 1.

Part III. *fed to every one, and yet found in all.* This Paſſage brings to my mind (though it more properly belongs to the next Inſtance of *Charity*) what *Palladius* relates of *Macarius*, a *Presbyter* and Governor of the *Hoſpital* at *Alexandria*: There was a Virgin in that City very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and ſet upon by the Perſuaſions of good Men, but in vain; at laſt he caught her by this piece of *pious* Policy: He comes to her, and tells her, that a parcel of Jewels, *Emeralds* and *Jacinths*, of ineſtimable Value, were lodg'd at his Houſe; but which the Owner was willing to part with for five hundred pieces of Mony; and adviſes her to buy them. She catching at the offer, as hoping to gain conſiderably by the Bargain, delivered him the Mony, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a Perſon of great Piety and Integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, ſhe asked him what were become of the *Jewels?* He told her, he had laid out the Mony upon them (for he had expended it upon the Uſes of the *Hoſpital*) and deſired her to come and ſee them; and if the Purchaſe did not pleaſe her, ſhe might refuſe it. She readily came along with him to the Hoſpital, in the upper Rooms whereof the *Women* were lodged, in the lower the *Men*. He asked her which ſhe would ſee firſt, the *Jacinths*, or the *Emeralds*; which ſhe leaving to him, he brought her firſt into the upper part where the *Lame*, *Blind*, and *Cripple-Women* were diſpoſed; and *See*, ſaid he, *the Jacinths that I ſpoke of!* Then carrying her down into the lower Rooms, he ſhewed her the *Men* in the like Condition, and told her, *Theſe are the Emeralds that I promiſed, and Jewels more precious than theſe, I think, are not to be found. And now*, ſaid he, *if you like not your Bargain, take your Mony back again.*

Hiſt. Lauſ. c. 6. p. 22.

again. The Woman blushed, and was troubled to think she should be haled to that, which she ought to have done freely for the Love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked *Macarius*, and betook her self to a more Charitable and Christian course of Life. Chap. 2.

Next to this, their Charity appeared in *visiting* and assisting of the *Sick*; contributing to their Necessities, refreshing their tired Bodies, curing their Wounds or Sores with their own Hands. The Sick (saith the antient Author of the Epistle in *Justin Martyr*, if it be not *Justin* himself) are not to be neglected; nor is it enough for any to say, I have never learnt to serve and give attendance: For he that shall make his Delicacy or Tenderness unaccustomed to any hardness, to be an Excuse in this case, let him know it may soon be his own; and then he'll quickly discern the unreasonableness of his own Judgment, when the same shall happen to him, that he himself has done to others. But there were no such nice and squeamish Stomachs, in the good *Christians* of those times. St. *Hierom* tells us of *Fabiola*, a *Roman* Lady, a Woman of considerable Birth and Fortunes, That she sold her Estate, and dedicated the Mony to the Uses of the Poor: she built an Hospital (and was the *first* that did so) wherein she maintained and cured the Infirm and Miserable, or any sick that she met withal in the Streets: Here was a whole *rendesvouz* of Cripples, hundreds of Diseases and Distempers here met together, and her self at hand to attend them; sometimes carrying the diseased in her arms, or bearing them on her shoulders; sometimes washing and dressing those filthy and noisom Sores, from which another would have turned his Eyes with Contempt and Horrour; otherwhile preparing them Food, or giving them Physick with her own Hand. The like we

Epist. ad Zen. & Seren. p. 514.

Epitaph. Fabiol. & ad Ocean. p. 199. tom. 1.

Part III. we read of *Placilla* the *Empress*, Wife to the younger *Theodosius*, that she was wont to take all possible care for the Lame or Wounded, to go home to their Houses, carry them all necessary Conveniences, and to attend, and assist them, not by the ministery of her Servants and Followers, but with her own Hands. She constantly visited the common *Hospitals*, attended at sick Beds for their Cure and Recovery, tasted their Broths, prepared their Bread, reached them their Provisions, washed their Cups with her own Hands, and underwent all other Offices, which the very meanest of the Servants were to undergo. Thus also the *Historian* reports of *Deogratias*, the aged Bishop of *Carthage*, under the *Vandalick* Persecution, That having sold all the Plate belonging to the Church, to ransom the captive *Christians*, and wanting places conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the Needy; took care of the Sick, himself every Hour visiting them both by Day and Night, with Physicians attending him to superintend their Cure and Diet suitable to their several Cases, going from Bed to Bed, to know what every one stood in need of. Nay, how often did they venture to relieve their Brethren, when labouring under such Distempers as seemed immediately to breathe *Death* in their Faces? Thus in that sad and terrible Plague at *Alexandria*, which though it principally raged amongst the *Gentiles*, yet seized also upon the *Christians*: Many of the Brethren (says the *Historian*) out of the excessive abundance of their *Kindness* and *Charity*, without any regard to their own Health and Life, boldly ventured into the thickest Dangers; daily visiting, attending, instructing, and comforting their sick and infected Brethren, till themselves expired and died with them. Nay, many of them, whom they thus attended, recovered and lived, while they who had looked to them, died themselves; as if by

Theod. H. Eccl. lib. 5. c. 18. p. 160.

Vict. Vtic. de persecu. Vandal. lib. 1. fol. 5. p. 2.

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 7. c. 22. p. 269.

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a ſtrange and prodigious *Charity* they had willingly taken their Diſeaſes upon them, and died themſelves to ſave them from death. Thus 'twas with the *Chriſtians*, while the *Gentiles*, in the mean time, put off all ſenſe of Humanity: when any began to fall ſick amongſt them, they preſently caſt them out, ſhunn'd their deareſt Friends and Relations, left them half-dead in the Highways, and took no care of them, either alive or dead. Chap. 2.

And that this work of Charity might be the better managed amongſt *Chriſtians*, they had in many Places (and particularly in this of *Alexandria*) certain Perſons, whoſe proper Office it was to attend and adminiſter to the Sick: They were called *Parabolani*, (becauſe, eſpecially in peſtilential and infectious Diſtempers, they did παραβάλλεσθαι, *caſt* themſelves into an immediate hazard of their Lives) and were peculiarly deputed, *ad curanda debilium ægra corpora*, (as the Law of the younger *Theodoſius* expreſſes it) to attend and cure the Bodies of the Infirm and Sick. Their *numbers*, it ſeems, were very great; inſomuch, that upon any tumultuary occaſions, they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature: upon Complaint whereof made to the Emperor, *Theodoſius* reduced their Number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a ſecond *Conſtitution* he enlarged it to ſix hundred. The truth is, theſe *Parabolani* were a kind of *Clergy-Phyſicians*; for that they were under an Eccleſiaſtical Cognizance is plain, being reckoned up with the *Clergy*: and accordingly, by the latter Conſtitution of *Theodoſius*, are appointed to be choſen by, and to be immediately ſubject to the *Biſhop* of the Place. *Cod. Theod. lib.* 16. *tit.* 2. *de Epiſcopis, &c.* §. 42, 43.

A third inſtance of their Love and Charity, (and which St. *Ambroſe* calls the *higheſt* piece of Liberality) was their care of thoſe that were in *Captivity*, groaning under the mercileſs Tyranny and Oppreſſion *Offic. lib.* 2. *c.* 15. *p.* 42.

Part III.

sion of their Enemies, to *relieve* them under, and *redeem* them out of their Bondage and Slavery. *Cyprian*, in a Letter to the Bishops of *Numidia*, about this very thing, The Redemption of those *Christians* amongst them that had been taken Captive by the *Barbarians*; elegantly bewails their Misery, and earnestly presses their Redemption; and as a help towards it, sent them *Sestertium centum millia nummum:* which *Rigaltius* computes to twenty five thousand Pounds *French*, though others, more truly, reduce it to a much lower Sum, *viz.* seven thousand five hundred, or two thousand five hundred Crowns: which he and his People had liberally contributed to it. Of *Acasius* Bishop of *Amida*, we read in *Socrates*, That when the *Roman* Army had taken seven thousand *Persians* captive, and would neither release them without a Ransom, nor yet give them Food to keep them alive; this good Bishop, with the Consent of the Clergy of his Church, caused all the Gold and Silver *Plate*, and Vessels that belonged to their Church to be melted down; ransomed the Wretches, fed them, and then freely sent them home to their own Prince: With which *generous* Charity the King of *Persia* (as he well might) was strangely amazed, finding that the *Romans* knew how to conquer an Enemy by *Kindness*, no less than by Force of *Arms*. The like St. *Ambrose* relates of himself, that he caused the *Communion-Plate* of his Church to be broke in pieces, to redeem Christians taken captive by the Enemy; for which, though he was blamed by the *Arian* Party, yet he elegantly defends the Fact, as not only a justifiable, but a proper and eminent Act of Charity. And indeed 'tis the only Case wherein the *Imperial* Constitutions make it lawful to *sell* or *pawn* the Plate and Gifts belonging to the Church; it being otherwise made *Sacrilege* to receive them, and the things absolutely forfeited

Epist. 60. *p.* 96.

Rigalt. in loc.

Gronov. de pecun. vet. lib. 2. *c.* 2. *p.* 131.

H. Eccl. lib. 7. *c.* 21. *p.* 360.

Ibid. c. 28. *p.* 50.

Phot. Nomocan. Τιτ. β. περ. ἐκκλης. καὶ σκευῶν, &c. κεφ. β. *p.* 43.

forfeited by those that bought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a *stranger* Charity than this in the Primitive Church; some that have parted with their own Liberty to purchase Freedom unto others. So St. *Clemens* assures us, in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*: *We have known many amongst our selves* (says he) *who have delivered themselves into Bonds and Slavery, that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who have hired out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted.* Of which this one strange Instance shall suffice. Under the *Vandalick* Persecution, many Christians were carried Slaves out of *Italy* into *Africk*, for whose Redemption *Paulinus* then Bishop of *Nola* had expended his whole Estate: at last a Widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son, then Slave to the King of the *Vandals* Son-in-Law. He told her he had not one Penny left, nothing but his own Person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her Son's Ransom. This the Woman looked upon from a Person of his Quality, as rather a *deriding* her Calamity, than a *pitying* of her Case: But he assured her he was in earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took shipping for *Africk*, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop addressed himself to the Prince, begged the Release of the Widow's Son, and offered himself in his room. The issue was, The Woman had her Son restored her, and *Paulinus* became the Prince's Slave, who employed him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiated himself into the Favour of his Master, and came to be discovered to him who he was; how the Prince set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would, which he made no further use of than to

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Pag. 70.

Greg. Magn. dial. lib. 3. *c.* 1. *p.* 98. *Edit. col.* 1610.

Part III. beg the Releaſe of all his Country-men then in Bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully ſent home with their Ships laden with Corn and Proviſions; I omit as not pertinent to my purpoſe: they that are deſirous to know more of it, may read it in the Dialogues of St. *Gregory*, from whence I have borrowed the Story. This certainly was Charity with a witneſs, an Act that will find more to admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth Inſtance of Primitive Charity, was the great Care they took about the *Bodies* of the *Dead* in giving them *decent*, and, where they could, *honourable* Burial. All Men naturally have a kindneſs for their Bodies, and therefore deſire, That what has ſo long been the Manſion of an *immortal* Tenant, may upon its diſ-lodging be orderly taken down, and the Ruins of it laid up with Honour and Safety. Man's Body beſides that it is the Cabinet of an invaluable Jewel, is a curious piece of Artifice, *fearfully and wonderfully made*, the excellent Contrivance of the Divine Omniſcience, and in that reſpect challenges not to be careleſly thrown aſide, or rudely trampled in the dirt. This ſeems to be the common Senſe of Mankind, it being the Care and Practice of almoſt all Nations in the World, religiouſly to enſhrine the Remains of their deceaſed Friends in Tombs and Sepulchers; thinking it but reaſonable to teſtify ſo much Kindneſs to their departed Friends, as to honour their Memories, and to ſecure from rude barbarous Violence, what they left behind them when they put off Mortality. Sure I am, this was eminently the Care of *Chriſtians*; no Dangers or Threatnings could affright them from doing this Office to their deceaſed Brethren, eſpecially ſuch as had been *Martyrs* and *Champions* for the Truth. The *Roman* Clergy in an Epiſtle to them of *Carthage*, reckons it as one of the greateſt Inſtances of Charity, above

Epiſt. 2. inter Ep. Cyp. p. 9.

above that of relieving the Poor, miniſtring to the Sick, or the reſt which they there enumerate and reckon up: tells them, That it could not be neglected without great Danger, and that Fidelity in this matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him. *Dionyſius*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, ſpeaking of the Plague that raged there (which was mentioned but now) commends the Chriſtians for aſſiſting their ſick dying Brethren, that they cloſed their Eyes, laid them out, waſhed their Bodies, dreſſed and adorned them up for Burial, and carried them out upon their own ſhoulders; which they cheerfully did, notwithſtanding the imminent Danger that attended it, and that it was not long before others were called to do the ſame Offices for them. Their Bodies they decently committed to the Ground, for they abhorred the Cuſtom ſo common among the *Gentiles* of *burning* the Bodies of the Dead; which they did, not (as the Heathens objected) becauſe they thought that their Bodies once burnt to Aſhes would be difficultly brought to a *Reſurrection* (a Doctrine which they ſtrenuouſly aſſerted, and held faſt as the main *Pillar* of their Comfort and Confidence) but becauſe they looked upon it as *inhuman* and *barbarous*, and contrary to the more antient and better Uſage of Mankind in this matter. *Tertullian* calls this way of Burial by *inhumation*, a piece of Piety, and tells us they abſtained from burning the Corps, not as ſome did, becauſe they thought that ſome part of the Soul remained in the Body after Death; but becauſe it ſavoured of Savageneſs and Cruelty. Therefore their Enemies, to do them the greater ſpite, did not only put them to death, but very often burn their dead Bodies, and ſprinkle their Aſhes into the Sea; partly to hinder them from a decent Burial, and partly (as in that Tumult at *Alexandria* under *Julian*) that nothing might be left of them to be honoured

Chap. 2.

Ibid. ubi ſupra.

Min. Fœl. p. 928.

De anim. c. 51. *p.* 303.

Amm. Marcellin. lib. 22. *p.* 1627.

Part III. honoured as the Remains of Martyrs. As Chriſtianity got ground, this more civil way of Inhumation did not only take place, but rooted out the contrary Cuſtom, even amongſt the *Gentiles* themſelves: For though the Emperor *Theodoſius the Great* gives ſome intimation of it, as remaining in his time, yet not long after it wholly ceaſed; as is expreſly acknowledged by *Macrobius*, who lived in the time of the younger *Theodoſius*.

Cod. Theod. l. 6. tit. 17. de Sep. viol.

Lib. 9. Saturnal. lib. 7. c. 7. p. 514.

Nor did they ordinarily content themſelves with a bare Interment, but prepared the Body for its Funeral with coſtly *Spices*, and rich Odours, and Perfumes; not ſparing the beſt Drugs and Ointments which the *Sabeans* could afford, as *Tertullian* plainly teſtifies. They who while alive generally abſtained from whatever was curious and coſtly, when dead were embalmed and entombed with great Art and Curioſity. Whence *Eunapius* (much ſuch a Friend to Chriſtianity as *Julian* or *Porphyry*) derides the *Monks* and *Chriſtians* of *Egypt* for honouring the ſeaſoned and embalmed *Bones* and *Heads* of Martyrs; ſuch (*ſays he*) as the Courts of Juſtice had condemned, and put to death for their innumerable Villanies. This Coſt the Chriſtians doubtleſs beſtowed upon the Bodies of their Dead, becauſe they looked upon Death as the entrance into a better Life, and laid up the Body as the *Candidate* and Expectant of a joyful and happy Reſurrection. Beſides, hereby they gave ſome Encouragement to Suffering, when Men ſaw how much Care was taken to honour and ſecure the Reliques of their Mortality, and that their Bodies ſhould not be perſecuted after Death.

Apol. l. 42. p. 34.

De vit. Philoſ. in vit. Ædeſ. p. 65.

This their Enemies knew very well, and therefore many times denied them the Civility and Humanity of Burial, to ſtrike the greater Dread into them. Thus *Maximus* the Preſident threatned *Tharacus* the Martyr, That although he bore up his Head ſo high upon

Act. SS. Tharac. Prob. & Andron. apud Baron. ad Ann. 299. tom. 2.

upon the Confidence, that after his Death his Body should be wound up and embalmed with Ointments and odoriferous Spices; yet he would defeat his Hopes, by causing his Body to be burnt, and sprinkling his Ashes before the Wind. Chap. 2.

Thus after they had put *Polycarp* to death, they burnt his Body out of spite to the Christians, who had begged it of the Proconsul, only to give it a solemn Interment; whereupon gathering his Bones, which the Mercy of the Fire had spared, they decently committed them to the Earth, and there used to meet to celebrate the Memory of that Pious and Holy Man. *Euseb. H. Eccl. lib.* 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 135.

During those Times of Persecution, they were very careful to bury the Bodies of the *Martyrs*, some making it their particular Business by stealth to inter those in the Night, who had suffered in the Day: this they did with great Hazard and Danger, many of them (as appears from the antient *Martyrologies*) suffering Martyrdom upon this very account. Afterwards, when the Church was settled, there was a particular Order of Men called *Copiatæ*, (either ἀπὸ τῦ κοπιᾶσθαι, from the *pains* they took, or else ἀπὸ τῦ κοπάζειν, because they committed the Bodies of the Dead to the Grave, the place of *Ease* and *Rest*) appointed for this purpose about the time of *Constantine*, or to be sure his Son *Constantius*, in two of whose Laws they are expresly mentioned, and in the latter said to be lately instituted. Their Office (as *Epiphanius* tells) was to wrap up and bury the Bodies of the Dead, to prepare their Graves, and to inter them: And because Inhumation and giving Burial to the Dead was ever accounted, in a more peculiar manner, a Work of Piety and Religion, therefore these Persons were reckoned, if not strictly *Clergy-men*, at least in a Clergy-relation, being in both Laws of *Constantius* enumerated with, and in- *Cod. Theod. lib.* 13. *tit.* 1. *de Lustr. Con. l.* 1. *Lib.* 16. *tit.* 2. *de Episc. l.* 15. λόγ. συνταγμ. περὶ πίστ. *p.* 465.

Part III. vested in the same Immunities with the Clergy. By the Author in St. *Hierom* they are stiled *Fossarii*, Grave-makers, and by him placed in the first and lowest Order of the *Clerici*, and exhorted to be like good old *Tobit* in Faith, Holiness, Knowledg, and Vertue. In the great Church of *Constantinople* they were called *Decani*, or *Deans* (but quite distinct from the *Palatine Deans* spoken of in the *Theodosian Code*, and frequently elsewhere; who were a military Order, and chiefly belonged to the *Emperor*'s Palace) they were one of the *Collegia*, or Corporations of the City. Their Number was very great, *Constantine* is said to have appointed no less than MC. of them: But by a Law of *Honorius* and *Theodosius*, they were reduced to DCCCCL; till afterwards *Anastasius* brought them back to their former Number, which was also ratified and confirmed by *Justinian*: Their particular Duties and Offices both as relating to the Dead, and all other things, are largely described in two *Novel* Constitutions of his to that purpose.

De Sept. Ordin. Eccl. tom. 4. p. 81.

Lib. 6. tit. de Decanis, l. 1.

Lib. 1. C. tit. 2. de SS. Eccles. l. 4.

Novel. Justin. 43. p. 114. & 59. p. 134.

Nor did they only take care that the Body might be prepared for its Funeral, but to provide it of a decent and convenient *Sepulcher*, wherein it might be honourably and securely laid up; a thing which had been always practised by the more sober and civilized Part of Mankind. Their Burying-places (called *Polyandria*, *Cryptæ*, *Arenaria*, but most commonly *Cœmeteria* or *Dormitories*, because according to the Notion which the Scriptures give us of the Death of the Righteous, *Christians* are not so properly said to *die* as to *sleep in the Lord*, and their Bodies to *rest* in the Grave in expectation of a joyful Resurrection) were generally in the *Fields* or *Gardens*; it being prohibited by the *Roman* Laws, and especially an antient Law of the XII *Tables*, to bury within the City-walls. This held for some Centuries after

Apud. Cicer. de leg. lib. 2. p. 288. vol. 4.

after Christianity appeared in the World, and longer it was before they buried within Churches; within the *Out-parts* whereof to be interred, was a Privilege at first granted only to *Princes* and Persons of the greatest Rank and Quality. *Chrysostom* assures us, That *Constantius* the *Emperor* reckoned he did his Father *Constantine the Great* a peculiar Honour, when he obtained to have him buried in the *Porch* of the Church, which he had built at *Constantinople*, to the Memory of the *Apostles*, and wherein he had earnestly desired to be buried, as *Eusebius* tells us; and in the same, many of his Successors were interred: it not being in use then, nor some hundreds of Years after, for Persons to be buried in the *Body* of the Church, as appears from the *Capitula* of *Charles the Great*, where burying in the Church, which then it seems had crept into some places, is strictly forbidden. Chap. 2.

Hom. 26. in Cap. 12. 2 ad Cor. p. 929.

De vit. Const. lib. 4. c. 71. p. 562.

Lib. 1. cap. 159. fol. 27. p. 1.

During the first Ages of Christianity, while the Malice of their Enemies persecuted them both *alive* and *dead*, their *Cœmeteria* were ordinarily *under ground*; imitating herein the Custom of the *Jews*, whose Scpulchers were in Caverns and Holes of Rocks: though doubtless the *Christians* did it to avoid the Rage and Fury of their Enemies, not so much upon the account of *Secrecy*; for their frequent retiring to those places was so notorious, as could not escape the Observation of their Enemies, and therefore we sometimes find the *Emperor's* Officers readily coming thither; but it was upon the account of that *Sacredness* and Religion that was reckoned to be due to places of this nature: it being accounted by all Nations a piece of great Impiety, *Manes temerare sepultos*, to disturb and violate the Ashes of the dead. They were large *Vaults* dug in dry sandy places, and arched over, and separated into many little *Apartments*, wherein on either side the Bodies

Part. III. of the Martyrs lay in distinct Cells, each having an *Inscription* upon Marble, whereon his *Name*, *Quality*, and probably the Time and *Manner* of his Death were engraven: Though in the Heats of Persecution they were forced to bury great Numbers together in one common Grave (LX, *Prudentius* tells us he observed) and then not the Names, but only the Number of the interred was written upon the Tomb. Indeed the multitudes of Martyrs that then suffered, required very large Conveniencies of Interment. And so they had; insomuch that the last Publisher of the *Roma Subterranea* assures us, That though those *Cœmiteria* were under ground, yet were they many times double, and sometimes treble, two or three Stories one still under another.

Prudent. Peri. Steph. Pass. Hippol. Mart. Hym. 11. *p.* 139.

Lib. 1. *c.* 2. *num.* 9. *p.* 4.

By reason thereof they must needs be very dark, having no Light from without, but what peep'd in from a few little Cranies, which filled the place with a kind of sacred Horrour, as St. *Hierom* informs us; who while a Youth, when he went to School at *Rome*, used upon the Lord's-day to visit these solemn places. Built they were by pious and charitable Persons (thence called after their Names) for the Interment of Martyrs, and other uses of the Church: for in these places Christians in times of Persecution were wont to hide themselves, and to hold their Religious Assemblies, when banished from their Publick Churches, as I have formerly noted. Of these about *Rome* only, *Baronius* out of the Records in the *Vatican* reckons up XLIII, and others to the Number of *threescore*. We may take an Estimate of the rest by the account which *Baronius* gives of one, called the *Cemetery* of *Priscilla*, discovered in his time, *An.* 1578. in the *Via Salaria* about three Miles from *Rome*, which he often viewed and searched: It is *(says he)* strange to report, the place by reason of the Vastness and Variety of Apartments,

Comment. in c. 40 *Ezekiel, tom* 5. *p.* 521.

Ad Ann. 226. *tom.* 2.

Ad Ann. 130. *vid. ad Ann.* 57. *tom.* 1. *num.* 112.

partments, appearing like a *City under ground*. At the Entrance into it there was a principal Way, or Street much larger than the reſt, which on either hand opened into divers other Ways, and thoſe again divided into many leſſer Ways and Turnings, like Lanes and Alleys within one another. And as in Cities there are void open places for the *Markets*; ſo here there were ſome larger Spaces for the holding (as occaſion was) of their religious Meetings, wherein were placed the *Effigies* and Repreſentations of Martyrs, with places in the top to let in *light*, long ſince ſtopt up. The Diſcovery of this place cauſed great wonder in *Rome*, being the moſt exact and perfect *Cemetery* that had been yet found out. Thus much I thought good to add upon occaſion of that ſingular Care, which Chriſtians then took about the Bodies of their Dead. If any deſire to know more of theſe venerable Antiquities, they may conſult *Onuphrius de Cœmeteriis*, and eſpecially the *Latin* Edition of the *Roma Subterranea*, where their largeſt Curioſity may be fully ſatisfied in theſe things. *Edit. a Paul. Aringio. Rom.* 1651. *& Col.* 1659.

Chap. 2.

Many other Inſtances of their Charity might be mentioned; their ready entertaining Strangers, providing for thoſe that laboured in the Mines, marrying poor Virgins, and the like; of which to treat particularly, would be too vaſt and tedious. To enable them to do theſe charitable Offices, they had not only the extraordinary Contributions of particular Perſons, but a common *Stock* and Treaſury of the Church. At the firſt going abroad of the Goſpel into the World, ſo great was the Piety and Charity of the Chriſtians, that *the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul, neither ſaid any of them, that ought of the things which he poſſeſſed was his own, but they had all things common; neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were Poſſeſſors of Lands or Houſes, ſold them, and brought*

Part III. *brought the Prices of the things that were ſold, and laid them down at the Apoſtles Feet, and diſtribution was made unto every Man according as he had need.* But this Community of Goods laſted not long in the Church: we find St. *Paul* giving order to the Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth* for *weekly Offerings for the Saints; that upon the firſt Day of the Week* (when they never failed to receive the Sacrament) *they ſhould every one of them lay by him in Store according as God hath proſpered him.* This Cuſtom, *Juſtin Martyr* aſſures us, ſtill continued in his time: for deſcribing the Manner of their Aſſemblies on the *Lord's-day*, he tells us, That thoſe who were able and willing contributed what they ſaw good; and the Collection was lodged in the hands of the *Biſhop* or *Preſident*, and by him diſtributed for the Relief of Widows and Orphans, the Sick or Indigent, the Impriſoned or Strangers, or any that were in need. In the next Age they were reduced to monthly Offerings, as appears from *Tertullian*, who gives us this account of them in his time; That at their Religious Aſſemblies upon a monthly Day (or oftner if a Man will, and be able) every one according to his Ability laid by ſomewhat for charitable Uſes, (they put it into a kind of *poor Man's Box* called *Arca*, that ſtood in the Church) this they did freely, no Man being forced or compelled to it; leaving it behind them as a Stock to maintain Piety and Religion: for 'tis not ſpent *(ſays he)* upon Feaſts or Drinking-bouts, or to gratify Gluttony and Intemperance, but laid out in relieving the Needy, burying the Dead, providing for Orphans, ſupporting the Aged, recruiting the Spoiled, ſupplying the Impriſoned, and thoſe that were in Mines, Bonds, or Slavery for the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity.

1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2.

Apol. 2. *p.* 98, 99.

Apol. c. 39. *p.* 31.

Hiſtor. Lauſiac. c. 15. *p.* 41.

This was the Fruit of Primitive Devotion! *Palladius* tells us of two Brothers, *Paeſius* and *Eſaias*, Sons

Sons of a wealthy Merchant, That their Father being dead, and they resolving upon a more strict and religious Course of Life, could not agree upon settling their Estates in the same way. At last dividing their Estates, they disposed them thus: The one gave away his whole Estate at once, settling it upon *Monasteries*, *Churches*, and *Prisons*, for the relief of such as were in Bonds; and betaking himself to a Trade for a small Maintenance for himself, gave himself up to Prayer, and the severer Exercises of Religion. The other kept his Estate in his own Possession, but built a *Monastery*, and taking a few Companions to dwell with him, entertained all *Strangers* that came that way, took care of the *Sick*, entertained the *Aged*, gave to those that needed, and every *Saturday* and *Lord's-day* caused two or three *Tables* to be spread for the Refreshment and Entertainment of the *Poor*; and in this excellent way spent his Life. Chap. 2.

Now that this account that we have given of the admirable Bounty and Charity of the antient Christians is not *precarious*, and merely what the Christians tell us of themselves, we have the Testimony of two open Enemies of Christianity, *Julian* and *Lucian*, both bitter Enemies to Christians, and the fiercer, because both, as 'tis supposed, Apostates from them: and their Testimony is considerable upon a double account, partly because having lived amongst the Christians, they exactly knew their Ways and Manners; and partly because being Enemies to them, they would be sure to speak no more in their Commendation than what was true. *Julian*, speaking of the *Galileans*, tells us, That by their Charity to the Poor they begot πολὺ τῆς ἀθεότητος θαῦμα, the greatest Admiration of their Religion in the Minds of Men. And in an Epistle to the *High-Priest* of *Galatia*, bewailing the desolate State of the *Hea-*

Misopog. p. 99.

Part III. *Heathen World*, the Ruin of their Temples, and the great Declenſion of *Paganiſm* at that time, notwithſtanding all his Endeavours to make it ſucceed under the Influences of his Government; he adviſes the High-Prieſt to promote the *Gentile* Intereſt by the ſame Method, which the wicked Religion of the Chriſtians did thrive by, *i. e.* by their Bounty to *Strangers*, their Care in *burying* of the Dead, and their *Holineſs* of Life. And elſewhere, *The Poor* (ſays he) *having no Care taken of them, the wicked* Galileans *know very well how to make their advantage of it; for they give themſelves up to Humanity and Charity, and by theſe plauſible and inſinuative Ways, ſtrengthen and increaſe their wicked and pernicious Party: juſt as Men cheat little Children with a Cake, by two or three of which they tempt them to go along with them, till having got them from home, they clap them under Hatches, tranſport and ſell them; and ſo for a little ſeeming Pleaſure, they are condemned to Bitterneſs all their Life: And no otherwiſe* (ſays he) *'tis with them, they firſt inveigle honeſt-minded Men with what they call their Feaſts of Love, Banquets, Miniſtery and Attendance upon Tables, and then ſeduce them into their Wickedneſs and Impiety.* This, as at once it ſhews his *Venom* and Malice according to the Humour of the Man, ſo it openly bears witneſs out of the Mouth of an Enemy, to the moſt excellent and generous Spirit of the Goſpel. The other Teſtimony is that of *Lucian* (who if not a *Chriſtian* himſelf, for *Suidas*'s Δημητρὸς ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ does no way intimate him to have been a *Chriſtian* Preacher, notwithſtanding what the Generality of Writers have inferred thence; was yet however intimately acquainted with the Affairs of *Chriſtians*) who bringing in his Philoſopher *Peregrinus*, amongſt other *Sects* joining himſelf to the *Chriſtians*, tells us what care they took of him; when caſt into Priſon, they improved

Epiſt. 49. ad Arſac. oper. par. 2. p. 203.

Fragm. Epiſt. par. 1. p. 557.

In voc. Λυκιανὸς.

De mort. Peregrin. p. 762, 763. tom. 2.

proved all their Interest to have him released: But when this could not be granted, they officiously used all possible *Service* and Respect towards him; in the Morning, old Women, Widows, and Children flocked early to the Prison-doors; and the better sort got leave of the Keepers to sleep with him in the Prison all Night: then they had several sort of *Banquets*, and their *sacred Discourses*. Nay, some were sent in the name of the rest, even from the Cities of *Asia* to assist and encourage him; who brought him great Sums of *Mony*, under pretence of his Imprisonment: it being incredible what readiness they shew, when any such matter is once noised abroad, and how little they spare any cost in it. After which he tells us of them in general, That they equally contemn all the Advantages of this Life, and account them common, foolishly taking up their *Principles* about these things without any *accurate* Search into them; insomuch that if any *subtle* and *crafty* Fellow, that knows how to improve his Advantage, come amongst them, he grows very rich in a little time, by making a Prey of that simple and credulous People. Chap. 2. *Ibid. p. 764.*

There's one Circumstance yet behind, concerning the *Love* and *Charity* of those Times, very worthy to be taken notice of; and that is the universal Extent of it: they *did good to all, though more especially to them of the Houshold of Faith*; *i. e.* to Christians. They did not confine their Bounty merely within the narrow Limits of a *Party*, this or that Sect of Men, but embraced an Object of Love and Pity, wherever they met it. They were kind to all Men, yea to their bittereſt Enemies, and that with a Charity as large as the *Circles* of the Sun, that visits all parts of the World, and shines as well upon a *stinking* Dunghill, as upon a pleasant Garden. 'Tis certainly the strange and supernatural Doctrine of our Saviour,

You

Part III. *You have heard that it had been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: but I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.* This indeed is the *proper* Goodness and Excellency of *Christianity*, as *Tertullian* observes; it being *common* to all Men to *love* their Friends, but peculiar only to *Christians* to love their *Enemies*. *Athenagoras*, I remember, principally makes use of this Argument to prove the *Divinity* of the *Christian* Religion, and challenges all the great Masters of Reason and Learning among the *Heathens* to produce any, either of themselves or their Disciples, of so pure and refin'd a Temper, as could instead of *hating*, *love* their Enemies, bear *Curses* and *Revilings* with an undisturb'd Mind, and instead of *reviling* again, to *bless* and *speak well* of them, and to *pray* for them who lay in wait to take away their Lives. And yet this did *Christians*; they embraced their Enemies, pardoned and prayed for them; according to the *Apostle's* Rule, *When their Enemy hungred they fed him, when he thirsted they gave him Drink, and would not be overcome of Evil, but overcame Evil with Good.* When *Nazianzen* (then Bishop of *Constantinople*) lay sick, a young Man came to his Bed's feet, and taking hold of his Feet, with Tears and great Lamentation passionately begged pardon of him for his Wickedness; the Bishop asking what he meant by it, was told, That this was the Person that had been suborned by a wicked Party to have murdered him, and now being stricken with the Conscience of so great a Wickedness, came to bewail his Sin. The good Man immediately prayed to *Christ* to forgive him, desiring no other Satisfaction from him, than that henceforth he would *forsake* that heretical Party, and sincerely serve God as became a *Christian*. Thus when *Paul* the

Ad Scap. c. 1. p. 69.

Leg. pro Christian. p. 11.

Vit. ejus per Greg. Presb.

the Martyr was haſtening to his Execution, he only begged ſo much reſpite till he might pray (which accordingly he did) not only for the Peace and Happineſs of *Chriſtians*, but for the Converſion of *Jews* and *Samaritans*; for the *Gentiles*, that they might be brought out of Error and Ignorance to the Knowledg of God and the true Religion: he prayed for the People that attended his Execution; nay (ſuch his vaſt Goodneſs and Charity) for the very *Judg* that condemn'd him; for the *Emperors*, and the very *Executioner* that ſtood ready to cut off his Head, earneſtly begging of God *not to lay that great Wickedneſs to their Charge*. Nay, they did not think it enough *not to return Evil for Evil*, or barely to forgive their Enemies, unleſs they did them all the *kindneſs* that lay in their power. *Polycarp* plentifully *feaſted* the very Officers that were ſent to apprehend him; the ſame which St. *Mamas* the Martyr is alſo ſaid to have done, treating the Soldiers with the beſt Supper he had, when ſent by *Alexander*, the cruel Preſident of *Cappadocia*, to ſeize upon him. And we read of one *Pachomius*, an Heathen Soldier, in the firſt Times of *Conſtantine*, That the Army being well near ſtarved for want of neceſſary Proviſions, and coming to a City that was moſt inhabited by *Chriſtians*, they freely and ſpeedily gave them whatever they wanted for the Accommodation of the Army. Amazed with this ſtrange and unwonted Charity, and being told, that the People that had done it were *Chriſtians*, whom they generally preyed upon, and whoſe Profeſſion it was *to hurt no Man, and to do good to every Man*; he threw away his Arms, became an *Anchoret*, and gave up himſelf to the ſtricteſt Severities of Religion. This alſo *Julian* the Emperor plainly confeſſes; for urging *Arſacius*, the Chief Prieſt of *Galatia*, to take care of the Poor, and to build Hoſpitals in every City for

Euſeb. de Mart. Paul. c. 8. p. 332.

Euſ. l. 4. c. 15. p. 130.

Mart. ejus apud Sur. ad 17 Aug. tom. 4. ex. S. Metaph.

Metaphr. in vit. Pachom. apud Sur. ad diem 14 Maii, to. 3.

Ubi prius.

Part III. for the entertaining of poor Strangers and Travellers, both of their own and others Religions; he adds, *For it's a ſhame* (ſays he) *that when the* Jews *ſuffer none of theirs to beg, and the wicked* Galileans *relieve not only their own, but alſo thoſe of our Party, that we only ſhould be wanting in ſo neceſſary a Duty.* So prevalent is Truth, as to extort a Confeſſion from its moſt bitter and virulent Oppoſers. Of this I ſhall only add one Inſtance or two more, proper enough to be inſerted here. *Euſebius*, ſpeaking of that dreadful Plague and Famine that happened in the *Eaſtern* Parts under the Emperor *Maximinus*, wherein ſo many whole Families miſerably periſhed, and were ſwept away at once; he adds, That at this time the Care and Piety of the *Chriſtians* towards all, evidently approved it ſelf to all the *Gentiles* that were about them; they being the only Perſons that during this ſad and calamitous State of things performed the real Offices of *Mercy* and *Humanity*; partly in ordering and *burying* of the Dead, (thouſands dying every day, of whom no care was taken) partly in gathering together all the *Poor* that were ready to ſtarve, and diſtributing Bread to every one of them: The Fame whereof filled the Ears and Mouths of all Men, who extolled the *God of the Chriſtians*, and confeſſed that they had ſhewed themſelves to be the only truly Pious and Religious Perſons. And indeed the Charity was the more remarkable, in that the *Chriſtians* at this very time were under a moſt heavy Perſecution. Thus in the terrible Plague that in the Times of *Gallus* and *Voluſian* raged ſo much through the whole World (and that more or leſs for fifteen years together) eſpecially at *Carthage*, when innumerable Multitudes were ſwept away every day, and the Streets filled with the Carcaſes of the Dead, which ſeemed to implore the help of the *Living*, and

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 9. *c.* 8. *p.* 357.

to

to challenge it as their Right by the common Laws of Human Nature; but all in vain, every one trembling, flying and shifting for themselves, deserting their nearest Friends and Kindred, none staying, unless it were to make a Prey. In this sad and miserable Case, *Cyprian* (then Bishop of the Place) calls the *Christians* together, instructs them in the Duties of Mercy and Charity, puts them in mind, that it was no great wonder if their Charity extended to their *own Party*; the way to be *perfect*, was to do something *more* than *Heathens* and *Publicans*; *to overcome Evil with Good*; to imitate the Divine Benignity, *to love our Enemies*, and (according to our *Lord's* Advice) *to pray for the Happiness of them that persecute us*: that God continually made his *Sun* to *rise*, and his *Rain* to *fall*, not only for the Advantage of his *own* Children, but for all other Men's; and that therefore they should imitate the Example of such a *Father*, who professed themselves to be his *Children*. Immediately upon this, they unanimously agreed to assist their common Enemies, every one lending help according to his Rank and Quality. Those who by reason of their Poverty could contribute nothing to the Charge, did what was more; they personally wrought and laboured, an Assistance beyond all other Contributions. By which large and abundant Charity great Advantage redounded not to themselves only *of the Houshold of Faith*, but universally unto all.

Chap. 2.

Pont. in vit. Cypr. p. 13.

I shall sum up what hath been said upon this Argument, in that Elegant Discourse which *Lactantius* has concerning Works of Mercy and Charity. Since human Nature *(says he)* is weaker than that of other Creatures, who come into the World armed with Offensive and Defensive Powers, therefore our Wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful Disposition, that we might place the *Safeguard* of our Lives in mutual Assistances of one another.

Lact. Epitom. c. 7. *p.* 746.

Part III. For being all created by *one God*, and ſprung from one common *Parent*, we ſhould reckon our ſelves *a-kin*, and obliged to love all Mankind; and (that our Innocency may be perfect) not only not to do an *injury* to another, but not to revenge one when done to our ſelves; for which reaſon alſo we are commanded to *pray for our very Enemies*. We ought therefore to be kind and ſociable, that we may help and aſſiſt each other. For being our ſelves obnoxious to Miſery, we may the more comfortably hope for that help in caſe we need it, which our ſelves have given unto others. And what can more effectually induce us to relieve the Indigent, than to put our ſelves into their *ſtead*, who beg help of us? If any be hungry, let us *feed* him; is he naked, let us *clothe* him; is he wronged by a powerful Oppreſſor, let us *reſcue* and receive him. Let our Doors be open to *Strangers*, and ſuch who have not where to lay their Head. Let not our Aſſiſtance be wanting to *Widows* and *Orphans*: And (which is a mighty Inſtance of Charity) let us *redeem* the Captived, *viſit* and aſſiſt the Sick, who are able to take no care of themſelves; and for Strangers, and the Poor (in caſe they die) let us not ſuffer them to want the Conveniency of a *Grave*. Theſe are the Offices and the Works of Mercy, which whoever does, offers up a true and grateful Sacrifice to God; who is not pleaſed with the *Blood of Beaſts*, but the *Charity of Men*: whom therefore he treats upon their own Terms, has *Mercy* on them whom he ſees *merciful*, and is *inexorable* to thoſe who *ſhut up their Bowels* againſt them that ask them. In order therefore to our thus pleaſing God, let us make light of Mony, and tranſmit it into the *heavenly* Treaſures, *where neither Moth nor Ruſt doth corrupt, nor Thieves break through and ſteal*, nor Tyrants are able to ſeize and take it from us; but where it ſhall be kept to our Eternal Advantage under the *Cuſtody* of God himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableneſs.

The Laws of Chriſt tend to beget a Peaceable Diſpoſition. This ſeen in our Saviour himſelf, in his Apoſtles, and the whole Body of Chriſtians. The Account Juſtin Martyr *gives of them. The World over-run with Quarrels before Chriſt's Coming. The happy Alteration that ſucceeded upon his appearance in it. This particularly urged by* Euſebius, *How much Chriſtians contributed to the Peace and Quietneſs of the World. Their Unity among themſelves. Canonical Epiſtles; the ſeveral Sorts of them;* Συσταλτικαὶ, Ἀπολυτικαὶ, Εἰρηνικαὶ. *What their Nature and Tendency. Differences preſently endeavoured to be healed. The great Care and Sollicitude of* Conſtantine *that way. An eminent Inſtance of Condeſcenſion and Self-denial in* Gregory Nazianzen *for the Peace of the Church. Difference in Rituals and leſſer Matters no hindrance of Peace and Chriſtian Communion: manifeſted in the Caſe of* Polycarp *and* Anicetus *Biſhop of* Rome. *Chriſtians not provoked by every trifling Quarrel. The difference in this reſpect between them and the beſt Philoſophers.*

THE Primitive Chriſtians being of ſuch a Meek, Compaſſionate, and Benevolent Temper, as we have repreſented them, it cannot be

Part III. thought but that they were of a very quiet Diſpoſition and *peaceable* Converſation; and the having been ſo large in that, will excuſe me for being ſhorter in this. When our bleſſed *Saviour* came to eſtabliſh his Religion in the World, he gave a *Law* ſuitable to his *Nature*, and to the *Deſign* of his coming into the World, and to the Exerciſe of his Government, as he is *Prince of Peace*; a Law of Mildneſs and Gentleneſs, of Submiſſion and Forbearance towards one another. We are commanded to *follow Peace with all Men*; *to follow after the things that make for Peace*; *as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all Men.* We are forbidden all Feuds and Quarrels, enjoined *not to revenge our ſelves, but to give place unto Wrath, to let all Bitterneſs, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-ſpeaking be put away from us, with all Malice*; *to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake forgives us.* Theſe are the Laws of *Chriſtianity*, which whenever they are duly entertained, produce the moſt gentle and *good-natured* Principles, the moſt innocent and quiet Carriage. This eminently appeared in the Life of our bleſſed Saviour, who was the moſt incomparable Inſtance of *Kindneſs* and *Civility*, of *Peace* and *Quietneſs*; we never find him all his Life treating any with Sharpneſs and Severity but the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who were a pack of ſurly, malicious, *ill-natured* Fellows, and could be wrought upon by no other Methods; otherwiſe his Mildneſs and Humility, the Affability and Obligingneſs of his Converſation, and his remarkable *Kindneſs* to his greateſt Enemies, were ſufficiently obvious both in his Life and Death: and ſuch was the Temper of his Diſciples and Followers, this excellent Spirit (like *Leaven*) ſpreading it ſelf over the whole Maſs of *Chriſtians*, turning *the Bryar*

into a Myrtle-Tree, and the Vulture into a Dove. See the Account which *Justin the Martyr* gives of them. We who formerly valued our Mony and Estates before all things else, do now put them into a common *Stock*, and distribute them to those that are in need. We, who once hated each other, and delighted in mutual Quarrels and Slaughters, and according to the Custom refused to sit at the same Fire with those who were not of our own *Tribe* and Party; now, since the Appearance of Christ in the World, live familiarly with them, *pray for our Enemies*, and endeavour to persuade those that unjustly hate us, to order their Lives according to the excellent Precepts of *Christ*, that so they may have good hope to obtain the same Rewards with us from the great Lord and Judg of all things. Chap. 3. *Ap.* 2. *p.* 61.

But for the better understanding of this, it may be useful to observe what a remarkable Alteration in this respect the *Christian* Religion made in the World. Before *Christ's* coming, the World was generally over-run with *Feuds* and Quarrels, mighty and almost implacable Animosities and Divisions reigning amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the *Jews* looked upon the *Gentiles* as *Dogs* and *Out-casts*, refused all Dealings with them, even to the Denial of Courtesies of common Charity and Civility, such as to *tell a Man the Way*, or to give *him a draught of Water*; they reproach them as the vilest and most profligate part of Mankind, *Sinners of the Gentiles*, as the *Apostle* calls them, according to the usual Stile and Title. Nor did the *Gentiles* less scorn and deride the *Jews*, as a pitiful and contemptible Generation, stopping their Noses, and abhorring the very sight of them, if by chance they met them; they looked upon them as an *unsociable* People, as *Enemies* of all Nations, that did not so *Job* 4. 9. *Juv. Sat.* 14. *p.* 439. *Gal.* 2. 15.

much as *wish well* to any; nay, as *Haters* even of Mankind; as *Tacitus* and their Enemies in *Josephus* represent them. The Effect of all which was, that they oppressed and persecuted them in every place, trod them as Dirt under their Feet, till at the last the *Romans* came, and finally took away *both their Place and Nation.* Thus stood the Case between them till the Arrival of *the Prince of Peace*; who partly by his *Death*, whereby he *broke down the Partition-wall* between *Jew* and *Gentile*, partly by the healing Nature and Tendency of his *Doctrine*, partly by the quiet and peaceable Carriage of his Followers, did quickly *extirpate* and remove those mutual Feuds and Animosities, and silence those passionate and quarrelsom Divisions that were amongst them.

Hist. lib. 5. cap. 4, 5. p. 535. Ἔθνος ἄμικτον, ἀσύμφυλον, ὅτε θρησκείαν τὴν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔχον, ὅτε νόμοις χρώμενον ὁμοίοις, ἐχθρὸν δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἔθεσι, καὶ ἐπιπλεῦμασι πᾶ σῷ λαῷ καὶ ἅπασιν ἀνθρώποις —— δυσμενὲς ἔθνος, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀλλόκοτον.

Jos. Antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. c. 6. Vid. Esther. 3. 8. Vid. Cic. pro Flac. p. 368. tom. 2.

Præpar. Evang. l. 1. c. 4. p. 10, 11. *Vide Athanas. de Verb. Incarn. p.* 78. *tom.* 1.

This Argument *Eusebius* particularly prosecutes, and shews, That while the Nations were under *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, they were filled with Wars and Troubles, and all the Effects of barbarous Rage and Fury: but that after the Divine and Peaceable Doctrine of our Saviour came abroad, those Differences and Calamities began to cease, according to the Predictions that were of him, That *there should be Righteousness and abundance of Peace in his Days*; *that Men should beat their Swords into Ploughshares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks*; *that Nation should not lift up Sword against Nation, nor learn War any more:* That this must needs be in some measure the Effect of his Appearance; his Doctrine being so fitly calculated to soften the rough and brutish Manners of Men, and to train them up in milder and more humane

humane Institutions. And a little after he makes it an uncontroulable Argument of the Truth and Excellency of the *Christian* Doctrine, That it teaches Men to bear the Reproaches and Provocations of Enemies with a generous and unshaken Mind, and to be able not to revenge our selves, by falling foul upon them with the like Indignities and Affronts; to be above Anger and Passion, and every inordinate and unruly Appetite; to administer to the Wants and Necessities of the Helpless, and to embrace every Man as our Kindred and Country-man; and though reputed a Stranger to us, yet to own him, as if by the Law of Nature he were our nearest Friend and Brother. How much their Religion contributed to the Publick Tranquillity, by forbidding *Pride*, *Passion*, *Covetousness*, and such Sins as are the great Springs of Confusion and Disturbance, *Justin Martyr* tells the Emperors: As for Peace (says he) we above all Men in the World promote and further it; forasmuch as we teach, That no Wicked Man, no Covetous or Treacherous Person, no Good or Vertuous Man can lie hid from the Eye of God; but that every Man is travelling either towards an Eternal Happiness or Misery, according to the Desert and Nature of his Works: And did all Men know and believe this, no Man would dare for a few moments to deliver up himself to Vice and Wickedness, knowing it would lead him on to the Condemnation of Everlasting Fire; but would rather by all means restrain himself, and keep within the Bounds of Vertue, that he might obtain the Rewards that are dispensed by God, and avoid the Punishments that are inflicted by him. The truth is, our blessed *Lord* came not to inspire Men with Principles of Revenge and Passion, to teach them to *return Evil for Evil*, but to encourage Love and Gentleness, to teach Men to overcome

Chap. 3.

Ap. 2. *p.* 55.

Part III. by Suffering, and to obtain the Reward by Meekneſs and Patience. *Iſidore* the *Peluſiote*, treating of that place, *To him that ſmites thee on the right Cheek, turn the other alſo*, has this ſhort Diſcourſe upon it: The great *King* of *Heaven* came down from above to deliver to the World the Laws of an Heavenly Converſation; which he has propoſed in a way of Conflict and Striving, quite contrary to that of the *Olympick* Games. There he that fights and gets the better, receives the *Crown*; here he that is ſtricken and bears it meekly, has the Honour and Applauſe: There he that returns Blow for Blow, here he that *turns the other Cheek* is celebrated in the *Theater of Angels*; for the Victory is meaſured not by Revenge, but by a wiſe and generous Patience. This is the *new Law* of Crowns, this is the new way of Conflicts and Contentions.

Ep. 127. *l.*3. *p.*269.

Such was the Temper, ſuch the Carriage of *Chriſtians* towards their *Enemies*, and them that were without: within themſelves they maintained the moſt admirable Peace and Harmony, and were in a manner *of one Heart and Soul*. They lived in the ſtricteſt Amity, and abhorred all Diviſion as a Plague and Fire-brand. But becauſe Mens Underſtandings not being all of one *Size*, nor all Truths alike plain and evident, Differences in Mens *Judgments* and *Opinions* muſt needs ariſe; no Schiſm ever aroſe in the Church about any of the more conſiderable Principles of Religion, but it was preſently bewailed with the univerſal Reſentment of all pious and good Men, and the Breach endeavoured to be made up; no ways left unattempted, no Methods of Perſuaſion omitted that might contribute to it.

When *Novatus* (or rather *Novatian*) had made ſome *Diſturbance* in the *Church of Rome*, concerning the receiving the lapſed into Communion, *Dionyſius* (the good Biſhop of *Alexandria*) writes to him to extin-

*Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l.*6. *c.*45. *p.*247.

extinguish the Schism; telling him, 'Tis better to suffer any thing than that the Church of God should be rent in pieces: That it's no less glorious, and probably more illustrious, to suffer Martyrdom to keep Divisions out of the Church, than to die for not sacrificing to Idols; for in the one Case a Man suffers *Martyrdom* only upon his own Account, but in the other, he suffers for the Advantage and Benefit of the whole Church. And *Cyprian* positively asserts (according to the Apostle's Resolution of the Case) That without this Unity and Charity *a Man cannot enter into Heaven*; and that although he should deliver up himself to the *Flames*, or cast his Body to wild Beasts, yet this would not be the Crown of his *Faith*, but the Punishment of his *Falshood*; not the glorious *Exit* of a religious Vertue, but the Issue of Despair: such an one may be *killed*, but he cannot be *crowned*.——He that rents the Unity of the *Church*, destroys the *Faith*, disturbs the *Peace*, dissolves *Charity*, and profanes the *Holy Sacrament*. How severely they branded all Schism and Division in the *Church*; how *industriously* they laboured to take up all Controversies amongst *Christians*, and to reconcile dissenting Brethren, to maintain Concord and Agreement amongst *themselves*, and to prevent all Occasions of Quarrel and Dissension, might easily be made appear out of the Writers of those Times. Hence those *Canonical* Epistles (as they called them) wherewith Persons were wont to be furnished, when going from one Place to another; of which there were especially three sorts. First, Συστατικὰι, or *Commendatory* Epistles, mentioned by St. *Paul*, and were in use amongst the Heathens. They were granted to *Clergy-men* going into another *Dioceſs*, by the Bishop that ordained them, testifying their Ordination, their Soundness and Orthodoxy in the Faith, the Innocency and Unblamableness of their Lives. To those

Chap. 3.

De Unit. Eccl. p. 184.

Part III. those that had been under, or had been suspected of *Excommunication*, declaring their Absolution, and recommending them to be received in the number of the *faithful*. Lastly, they were granted to all, whether *Clergy* or *Laity*, that were to *travel*, as *Tickets* of *Hospitality*, that where-ever they came, upon producing these Letters they might be known to be *Catholick* and *Orthodox*, and as such received and entertained by them. A piece of Prudence which *Julian* the *Apostate* admired in the *Christian* Constitution, the like whereto he endeavoured to establish in his Pagan Reformation. The second Sort were Ἀπολυτικαὶ, Letters *Dimissory*, whereby Leave was given to Persons going into another Diocess, either to be *ordained* by the Bishop of that Place, or if ordained already, to be admitted and *incorporated* into the Clergy of that Church. Upon which account the antient *Councils* every where provide, That no Stranger shall either receive Ordination at the hands of another Bishop, or exercise any Ministerial Act in another Diocess, without the Consent and *Dimissory* Letters of the Bishop of that place from whence he comes. The third were Εἰρηνικαὶ, *Letters of Peace*, granted by the *Bishop*, to the Poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its Protection and Assistance; but especially to such of the Clergy as were to go out of one Diocess into another: it being directed to the Bishop of that Diocess, that he would receive him, that so he might take no Offence, but that peaceable Concord and Agreement might be maintained between them. By these Arts the Prudence of those Times sought to secure the Peace of the Church, and, as much as might be, prevent all Dissensions that might arise: And where matters of any greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compose and heal them?

Soz. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 16. p. 617. Naz. in Jul. 1. p. 102.

Hence those many *Synods* and *Councils* that were convened

convened to umpire Differences, to explain or *define Articles* of Faith, to condemn and suppress the Disturbers of the Church, and Innovators in Religion. What infinite Care did the good Emperor *Constantine* take for composing the *Arian* Controversies, which then began first to infect and overrun the World? How much his Heart was set upon it, his sollicitous Thoughts taken up about it; how many troublesome Days, and restless Nights it cost him; with what strong and nervous Arguments, what affectionate Intreaties he presses it; may be seen in that excellent Letter (yet extant in his Life) which he wrote to the *Authors* of those impious and unhappy Controversies. But when this would not do, he summoned the great Council of *Nice*, consisting of *three hundred and eighteen Bishops*; and in his Speech at the opening of that Council, conjured them by all that was dear and sacred to agree, and to compose those Dissensions which were risen in the Church; which, he seriously protested, he looked upon as more grievous and dangerous than any War whatever, and that they created greater Trouble and Inquietude to his Mind, than all the other Affairs of his Empire. And when several of the Bishops then in Council, had preferred *Libels* and Accusations one against another, without ever reading them, he bundled and sealed them all up together, and having reconciled and made them Friends, produced the Papers, and immediately threw them into the fire before their faces. So passionately desirous was that good Prince to extinguish the Flames, and to redeem the Peace of the Church at any rate. Were any *ejected* and thrown out of the Church, of which there might be a Suspicion of private Grudges, or Designs, the *Nicene* Council wisely provided, That in every Province a *Synod* should be held twice a year; where all

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De vit. Const. l. 3. c. 64. & seq. p. 473.

Ib. l. 3. c. 12. p. 489.

Part III. all the Bishops meeting together, might discuss the Case, and compose the Difference: Or (as *Joseph* the *Egyptian*, in his *Arabick* Version of that *Canon*, tells us) an *Arbitrator* was to be appointed between the differing Parties to take up the Quarrel, that it might not be a scandal to Religion.

Nor did there want meek and peaceable-minded Men, who valued the *publick* Welfare before any *private* and personal Advantage, and could make their own particular Concerns strike Sail, when the Peace and Interest of the Church called for it. When great Contests and Confusions were raised by some perverse and unquiet Persons about the See of *Constantinople*, (then possessed by *Gregory Nazianzen*) he himself stood up in the midst of the Assemby, and told the Bishops, how unfit it was, that they who were *Preachers* of Peace to others, should *fall out* amongst themselves; begged of them even by the *Sacred Trinity*, to manage their Affairs calmly and peaceably: and, *If I* (says he) *be the* Jonas *that raises the Storm, throw me into the Sea, and let these Storms and Tempests cease, I am willing to undergo whatever you have a mind to; and tho innocent and unblamable, yet for your Peace and Quiet sake, am content to be banished the Throne, and to be cast out of the City: only, according to the Prophet's Counsel, be careful to love Truth and Peace.* And therewith freely resigned his *Bishoprick*, though legally settled in it by the express Command and Warrant of the Emperor, and the universal Desires and Acclamations of the People.

Vit. Greg. Naz. per. Greg. Presb.

The same excellent Temper ruled in St. *Chrysostom*, one of his Successors in that *See*; when having elegantly pressed the Unity of the Church, and refuted those petty Cavils which his Adversaries had made against himself: *But if you* (says he to his People) *suspect these things of us, we are ready to deliver up our Place and Power to whomsoever you will; only*

Hom. 11. *in Ep. ad Eph. p.* 1110.

only let the Church be preſeuved in Peace and Unity. This was the brave and noble Diſpoſition of Mind, to which St. *Clemens* ſought to reduce the *Corinthians*, after they had fallen into a little Schiſm and Diſorder: Who is there among you (ſays he) of that *generous* Temper, that *compaſſionate* and *charitable* Diſpoſition? Let him ſay, if this *Sedition*, theſe *Schiſms* and *Contentions* have ariſen through my means, or upon my *account*, I'll depart and be gone whitherſoever you pleaſe, and will do what the People ſhall command; only let *Chriſt's* Sheep-fold, together with the *Elders* that are placed over it, be kept in peace. Chap. 3. *Ep. ad Cor. p.* 69.

Nay, when good Men were moſt zealous about the Main and Foundation-Articles of Faith, ſo as ſometimes rather to hazard *Peace*, than to betray the *Truth*; yet in matters of *Indifferency*, and ſuch as only concerned the *Rituals* of Religion, they mutually bore with one another, without any violation of that Charity which is the great Law of Chriſtianity. Thus in that famous Controverſy about the keeping of Eaſter, ſo much agitated between the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern* Churches, *Irenæus* in a Letter to *Pope Victor* (who of all that ever ſate in that Chair, had raiſed the greateſt ſtirs about it) tells him, That Biſhops in former times, however they differed about the Obſervation of it, yet always maintained an intire *Concord* and Fellowſhip with one another: the Churches being careful to maintain a *peaceable* Communion, tho differing in ſome particular Rites and Ceremonies; yea, even when their Rites and Cuſtoms ſeemed to claſh, by meeting together at the ſame place. Thus when *Polycarp* came to *Rome* from the *Churches* of the *Eaſt*, to treat with *Pope Anicetus* about this and ſome other Affairs, though they could not ſatisfy each other to yield the *Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 5. *c.* 24. *p.* 193.

Controverſy,

Part III. *Controverſy*, yet they *kiſſed* and embraced one another with mutual Endearments, received the *Holy Communion* together; and *Anicetus* (to do the greater Honour to *Polycarp*) gave him leave to celebrate and conſecrate the *Euchariſt* in his Church; and at laſt they parted in great Peace and Friendſhip: the Difference of the Obſervation not at all hindring the Agreement and Harmony of the *Churches*; it being agreed amongſt them by common Conſent (ſays *Sozomen* ſpeaking of this Paſſage) that in keeping this Feſtival, they ſhould each follow their own *Cuſtom*, but by no means break the *Peace* and *Communion* that was between them: for they reckoned it (ſays he) a very fooliſh and *unreaſonable* thing, that they ſhould fall out for a few Rites and Cuſtoms, who agreed in the main Principles of Religion.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 7. *c.* 19. *p.* 734.

The *Chriſtians* of thoſe Times had too deeply imbibed that Precept of our Saviour, *Love one another as I have loved you*, to fall out about every nice and trifling Circumſtance; no, when highlieſt provoked and affronted, they could *forbear* and *forgive* their *Enemies*, much more their *Brethren*; and were not like the *waſpiſh Philoſophers* amongſt the *Heathens*, who were ready to fall foul upon one another for every petty and inconſiderable Difference of Opinion that was amongſt them. So *Origen* tells *Celſus*: Both amongſt your Philoſophers and Phyſicians (ſays he) there are *Sects* that have perpetual Feuds and Quarrels with each other; whereas we who have entertained the Laws of the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, and have learnt both to ſpeak and to do according to his Doctrine, *bleſs them that revile us*; *being perſecuted*, *we ſuffer it*; *being defamed*, *we intreat*. Nor do we ſpeak dire and dreadful things againſt thoſe that differ from us in *Opinion*, and do not preſently embrace thoſe things which we have entertained;

Lib. 5. *p.* 273.

but

but (as much as in us lies) we leave nothing unattempted that may perſuade them to change for the better, and to give up themſelves only to the Service of the Great Creator, and to do all things as thoſe that muſt give an account of their Actions. In ſhort, *Chriſtians* were careful not to offend either *God* or *Men*, but to keep and maintain Peace with both: thence that excellent Saying of *Ephrem Syrus*, the famous Deacon of *Edeſſa*, when he came to die; *In my whole Life* (ſaid he) *I never reproached my Lord and Maſter, nor ſuffered any fooliſh Talk to come out of my Lips; nor did I ever curſe or revile any Man, or maintain the leaſt Difference or Controverſy with any Chriſtian in all my Life.* Chap. 4.

Vit. Ephr. Syr. per Greg. Nyſſ. tom. 2. p. 1033.

CHAP. IV.

Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

Magiſtracy the great Band of the Publick Peace. This highly ſecured by Chriſtianity. The Laws of Chriſt that way expreſs and poſitive. Made good in his own Practice, and the Practice of his Apoſtles. The ſame Spirit in ſucceeding Ages, manifeſted out of Juſtin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, *and* Origen. *Praying for Rulers and Emperors a ſolemn part of their publick Worſhip. Their ready Payment of all Cuſtoms and Tributes, and their Faithfulneſs in doing it. Chriſtians ſuch even under the heavieſt Oppreſſions and Perſecutions, and that when they had power to have righted and revenged*

venged themſelves. *An excellent Paſſage in* Tertullian *to that purpoſe. The Temper of the Chriſtian Soldiers in* Julian's *Army. The famous Story of* Mauricius, *and the* Thebæan *Legion under* Maximianus, *reported at large out of* Eucherius Lugdunenſis. *The Injuſtice of the Charge brought againſt them by the Heathens, of being Enemies to Civil Government. Accuſed of Treaſon. Of their refuſing to ſwear by the Emperor's* Genius. *Their denying to ſacrifice for the Emperor's Safety, and why they did ſo. Their refuſing to own the Emperors for Gods, and why. Their not obſerving the Solemn Feſtivals of the Emperors, and the Reaſons of it. Accuſed of Sedition, and holding unlawful Combinations. An Account of the* Collegia *and Societies in the* Roman *Empire. Chriſtianity forbidden upon that account. The Chriſtian Aſſemblies no unlawful Conventions. A vaſt Difference between them and the unlawful Factions forbidden by the* Roman *Laws. Their confident Challenging their Enemies to make good one Charge of Diſturbance or Rebellion againſt them: Their Laws and Principles quite contrary. The Heathens themſelves guilty of Rebellions and Factions, not the Chriſtians. The Teſtimony given them by* Julian *the Emperor. A Reflection upon the Church of* Rome, *for corrupting the Doctrine and Practice of Chriſtianity in this Affair. Their Principles and Policies in this matter.* Bellarmin's *Poſition,*

tion, That 'tis lawful to depose Infidel and Heretical Princes, and that the Primitive Christians did it not to Nero, Diocleſian, *&c. only becauſe they wanted Power, cenſured and refuted. This contrary to the avowed Principles of honeſt Heathens.*

HOW much Chriſtian Religion, tranſcribed into the Lives of its Profeſſors, contributes to the Happineſs of Men, not only in their ſingle and *private* Capacities, but as to the *publick* Welfare of Human Societies, and to the common Intereſts and Conveniences of Mankind; we have already diſcovered in ſeveral Inſtances. Now becauſe *Magiſtracy* and Civil Government is the great Support and Inſtrument of external Peace and Happineſs, we ſhall in the laſt place conſider, how eminent the firſt Chriſtians were for their **Submiſſion and Subjection to Civil Government.** And certainly, there's ſcarce any particular Inſtance wherein *Primitive Chriſtianity* did more triumph in the World, than in their exemplary Obedience to the Powers and Magiſtrates under which they lived; honouring their Perſons, revering their Power, paying their Tribute, obeying their Laws, where they were not evidently contrary to the Laws of *Chriſt*; and where they were, ſubmiting to the moſt cruel Penalties they laid upon them, with the greateſt Calmneſs and Serenity of Soul. The truth is, one great Deſign of the *Chriſtian* Law is to ſecure the Intereſts of *Civil* Authority: our Saviour has expreſly taught us, *That we are to give unto* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſar's, *as well as unto God the things which are God's.* And his Apoſtles ſpoke as plainly as words could ſpeak it, *Let every Soul be ſubject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God: the Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

Part III. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you Tribute also; for they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their Dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* Where we may take notice both of the *Strictness* and *Universality* of the Charge, and (what is mainly material to observe) this Charge given the *Romans*, at that time when *Nero* was their *Emperor*, who was not only a *Heathen* Magistrate, but the *first Persecutor* of *Christians*; a Man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the World scarce ever brought forth such a Monster, as the Orator truly stiles him, *A Beast in the shape of a Man.* The same Apostle, amongst other Directions given to *Titus* for the Discharge of his Office, bids him *put the People in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.* St. *Peter* delivers the same Doctrine, to a tittle; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the Punishment of evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well; for so is the Will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men.*

Themist. Orat. 5. *p.* 144. θηρίον ἐν μορφῇ ἀνθρώπου

Such are the *Commands*, and such was the *Practice* of *Christ* and his *Apostles.* When a *Tax* was demanded of him, though he was the *Son of God*, he refused not to pay *Tribute* unto *Cæsar*, even when it put him to the expence and charge of a Miracle. When arraigned for his Life at *Pilate*'s Bar, he freely owned his Authority, and chearfully submitted to that wicked and unrighteous Sentence, though able to command

mand more than *twelve Legions of Angels* for his Rescue and Deliverance. The *Apostles*, though unjustly scourged before the *Council*; yet made no tart Reflections, but *went away rejoycing*. When *Herod* had cut off St. *James*'s Head, and consigned *Peter* in Prison to the same Butchery and Execution, what *Arms* did the Christians use? rise up and put him out of the Throne, scatter *Libels*, raise *Tumults* or *Factions* in the City? Oh! no, the Church's weapons were *Prayers* and *Tears*, their only Refuge in those evil times. Chap. 4.

Nor did this excellent Spirit die with the Apostles; we find the same Temper ruling in the succeeding Ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the *Antients*) obey the Laws that are made, and by the Exactness of their Lives, go *beyond* that Accuracy, which the Law requires of them; they love all Men, though all Men study to afflict and persecute them. *Just. Mart. Epist. ad Diogn. p.* 497. Are there any (as *Athenagoras* concludes his Address to the *Emperors*) more devoted to you than we? who pray for the Happiness of your Government, that according to Right and Equity the *Son* may succeed his *Father* in the Empire, that your Dominions may be enlarged, and that all things may prosper that you take in hand: and this we do, as that which turns both to yours and our own Advantage, that so *under you leading a quiet and peaceable Life*, we may chearfully obey all those Commands which you lay upon us. *Leg. pro Christian. p.* 39. St. *Polycarp*, a little before his Martyrdom wrote to the *Christians* at *Philippi*, earnestly exhorting them all to obey their Rulers, and to exercise all Patience and *Long-suffering* towards them. *Apud Eus. l.* 3. *c.* 36. *p.* 108. And when he stood before the *Proconsul*, he told him, That this was the great Law of *Christianity*, that we are commanded by God to give all due Honour and Obedience to Princes and Potentates; such as is not *prejudicial* to us; *i. e.* (for so doubtless he means) such as is not *contrary* to the Principles of our Religion. *Ib. l.* 4. *c.* 15. *p.* 132.

Part III. ligion. *Tertullian* tells us, 'Twas a solemn part of the *Church-Service* in his time, to pray for the Happiness and Prosperity of the Princes under whom they lived: *We pray* (says he) *for the Emperors, for the Grandees and Ministers of State, for the Prosperity of the Age, for the Quietness of Affairs, for the Continuance of their Lives and Government; that God would give them a long Life, a secure Reign, an undisturbed House, powerful Armies, faithful Senators, honest Subjects, a quiet People, and indeed whatever they can wish for, either as Men or Emperors.* They that think (says he) that we are not sollicitous about the *Safety* of Princes, let them look into the Commands of God recorded in our *Scriptures*, which we freely expose to the view of all; there they'll find that we are enjoined to *pray* for the *Happiness* of our very *Enemies* and Persecutors: And who are so much such, as they? And yet we are plainly and particularly commanded to *pray for Kings, for Princes, and all that are in Authority, that the State of things may be quiet and peaceable.* A Christian being an *Enemy* to *no Man*, is much less to his *Prince*. Thus when *Celsus* seemed to object, as if the *Christians* refused to help the *Emperors* in their Wars, *Origen* answers, That they did really assist and help them, and that rather with *Divine* than *Human* Weapons, according to the Command of the Apostle; *I exhort, that, first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all Men, for Kings and all that are in Authority.* And he tells him, That the more eminent any Man is for Piety and Religion, he will be able to afford greater Assistance to his Prince, han a great many armed Soldiers that stand ready to fight for him, and to destroy his Enemies.

Ap. c. 39. *p.* 31. *Ibid.* c. 31.

Lib. 8. *p.* 426.

For all *Customs* and *Tributes*, none ever paid them more freely than they. For your *Taxes* and Tributes (says *Justin Martyr* to the *Emperors*) we are, above all

all other Men, every where ready to bring them in to your Collectors and Officers; being taught so to do by our great Master, who bad those that asked the question, Whether they might pay Tribute unto *Cæsar? to give unto* Cæsar *the things that are* Cæsar's, *and unto God the things that are God's.* For which reason we worship none but God: And as for you, in all other things we chearfully serve you, acknowledging you to be *Emperors* and Governours of Men, and praying that, together with your Imperial Power, you may have a wise and discerning Judgment and Understanding. If the *Emperor* command me to pay Tribute (says another of their *Apologists*) I am ready to do it; if my *Lord* command me to serve and obey him, I confess my Obligation to it. Man is to be served with that respect that is due to Man; but God only, who is invisible and incomprehensible, is to be *religiously* feared and honoured: If commanded to deny him, I must disobey, and die rather than be found perfidious and ingrateful to him. So *Tertullian* tells them, That although they refused to pay the Taxes rated upon them for Maintenance of the *Heathen Temples*, yet for all other Tributes they had cause to give the *Christians* thanks for so faithfully paying what was due, it being their Principle to abstain from defrauding of others; insomuch, that should they examine their Accounts how much of the Assessments was lost by the Fraud and Couzenage of them of their own Party, they would easily find that the *Christians* denial to pay that one Tax, was abundantly compensated and made up in their honest Payment of all the rest. The truth is, they were admirably exact and conscientious, as in all their Actions, so especially in those that related to the Publick, and concerned their Duty and Obedience to their Rulers and Governours.

Chap. 4.

Tatian Orat. contra Græc. p. 144.

Ap. c. 42. *p.* 34.

Nor were they thus only in *prosperous* Times, but

Part III. but under the heavieſt Perſecutions; as indeed the Rod was ſeldom off their Backs. The laſt mentioned *Apologiſt* bids their Judges go on to butcher them, and tells them, They did but force thoſe *Souls* out of their *Bodies*, which were praying to God for the Emperor's Happineſs, even while their Officers were doing of it. And *Cyprian* tells the *Proconſul*, That as badly as they were uſed, yet they ceaſed not to pray for the Overthrow and Expulſion of the common Enemies, for ſeaſonable Showers, and either for the removing or mitigating Publick Evils; begging of God day and night, with the greateſt Inſtance and Importunity, for the Peace and Safety of their Perſecutors; endeavouring to pacify and propitiate God, who was angry with the Iniquities of the Age. Nor were they thus kind and good-natured, thus ſubmiſſive and patient, for *want* of Power, and becauſe they knew not how to help it: *Tertullian* anſwers in this Caſe, That if they thought it lawful to *return evil for evil*, they could in *one Night*, with a few *Firebrands*, plentifully revenge themſelves; that they were no ſmall and inconſiderable Party, and that they needed not to betake themſelves to the little Arts of ſkulking Revenges, being able to appear in the capacity of open Enemies; that though of but yeſterday's ſtanding, yet they had filled all Places, all *Offices* of the Empire: and what Wars were they not able to manage, who could ſo willingly give up themſelves to be ſlain, did not the Law of Chriſtianity oblige them to be *killed* rather than to *kill?* Nay, that they need not take up Arms and rebel; for their Party was ſo *numerous*, that ſhould they but agree together to leave the *Roman Empire*, and to go into ſome remote Corner of the World, the Loſs of ſo many Members would utterly ruin it; and they would ſtand amazed and affrighted at that Solitude and Deſolation that would enſue upon it, and have more *Enemies* than

Cap. 30. *p.* 27.

Ad Demet. p. 202.

Ap. c. 37. *p.* 30.

than loyal *Subjects* left amongst them: whereas now they had the fewer *Enemies*, for having so many *Christians*. Chap. 4.

The *Christians* then opposed not their Enemies with the Points of their *Swords*, but with solid *Arguments* and mild Intreaties. Thus when *Julian* the *Emperor* urged in his Army, which was almost wholly made up of *Christians*, to wicked Counsels, and the practices of Idolatry, they withstood him only with *Prayers* and *Tears*; accounting this (says my Author) to be the *only* Remedy against Persecution. So far were they from resisting or rebelling, that they could quietly *die* at the *Emperor's* Command, even when they had Power lying at their foot. I cannot in this place omit the memorable Instance of the *Thebæan Legion*, being so exceedingly *apposite* and pertinent to my purpose, and so remarkable as no Age can furnish out such another Instance. I shall set down the Story entirely out of the *Author* himself, the account of their Martyrdom written by *Eucherius* Bishop of *Lyons*, who assures us he received the Relation from very credible hands; and it is thus:

Naz. invect. 1. in Jul. p. 94.

Mart. SS. Marcii & socior. ab Eucher. Lugdunens. conscrip. apud Sur. ad diem 22. Sept. p. 220. &c. Edit. Color. 1618.

Maximianus Cæsar (whom *Diocletian* had lately taken to be his Collegue in the *Empire*) a bad Man, and a bitter Persecutor of the *Christians*, was sent into *France*, to suppress a Mutiny and Rebellion risen there. To strengthen his Army, there was added to it a Band of *Christians*, called the *Thebæan Legion*, consisting (according to the manner of the *Romans*) of *six thousand six hundred sixty six* faithful, expert, and resolute Soldiers. Coming to *Octodurus* (a Place in *Savoy*) and being ready to offer Sacrifice to the Gods, he causes his Army to come together, and commands them under a great Penalty to swear by the *Altars* of their Gods, that they would unanimously fight against their Ene-

Part III. mies, and persecute the *Christians* as *Enemies* to the Gods: Which the *Thebæan Legion* no sooner understood, but they presently withdrew to *Agaunum*, (a Place eight Miles off, called at this day St. *Maurits*, from *Mauricius* the Commander of the *Legion*; a Place equally *pleasant* and *strong*, being encompassed about with craggy and inaccessible Rocks) to avoid, if it might be, the wicked and sacrilegious Command, and to refresh themselves, tired with so long a March. But the Emperor taking notice of the Army as they came to swear, quickly missed the *Legion*; and being angry, sent Officers to them to require them forthwith to do it: who enquiring what it was they were commanded to do, were told by the Messengers, That all the Soldiers had offered Sacrifices, and had taken the fore-mentioned Oath, and that *Cæsar* commanded them to return presently and do the like. To whom the Heads of the Legion mildly answered, That for this reason they left *Octodurus*, because they had heard they should be forced to sacrifice; that being *Christians*, and that they might not be defiled with the Altars of *Devils*, they thought themselves obliged to worship the *living* God, and to keep that Religion which they had entertained in the *East*, to the last Hour of their Life: That as they were a *Legion*, they were ready to any service of the War; but to return to him to commit Sacrilege, as he commanded, they could not yield.

With this Answer the Messengers returned, and told the Emperor, that they were resolved not to obey his Commands; who being transported with Anger, began thus to vent his Passion: *Do my Soldiers think thus to slight my Royal Orders, and the holy Rites of my Religion? Had they only despised the Imperial Majesty, it would have called for publick Vengeance; but together with the Contempt of me, an Af-*

front

front is offered to Heaven, and the Roman Religion is as much despised as I am. Let the obstinate Soldiers know, That I am not only able to vindicate my self, but to revenge the Quarrel of my Gods. Let my faithful Servants make haste, and dispatch every tenth Man, according as the fatal Lot shall fall upon him. By this equal Death, let those whose Lot it shall be to die first, know how able Maximian *is severely to revenge both himself and his Gods.* With that the Command is given, the *Executioners* sent, the Emperor's Pleasure made known, and every *tenth* Man is put to death; who chearfully offered their Necks to the Executioners, and the only Contention amongst them was, who should *first* undergo that glorious Death. This done, the *Legion* is commanded to return to the rest of the Army. Whereupon *Mauricius* the General of the *Legion*, calling it a little aside, thus bespake them: I congratulate (most Excellent *Fellow-Soldiers*) your *Courage* and Valour, that for the Love of *Religion*, the Command of *Cæsar* has made no Impression upon you; you have seen your Fellow-Soldiers, with Minds full of Joy, undergoing a glorious Death: how much afraid was I, lest being armed (and how easy is it for such to do so) you should, under a Pretence of *defending* them, have endeavoured to hinder their happy Funerals?—See, I am encompassed round with the Bodies of my Fellow-Soldiers, whom the dismal Executioner has torn from my side; I am besprinkled with the Blood of the *Saints*; my Clothes dyed with the *Reliques* of their sacred *Blood:* and shall I doubt to follow their *Death*, whose *Example* I so much congratulate and admire? Shall I concern my self to think what the *Emperor* commands, who is equally subject to the same Law of Mortality with my self?—— I remember we once took this *military Oath*, that with the utmost Hazard of our Lives we would

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Part III. would defend the Common-wealth; this we then engaged to the *Emperors*, though no *heavenly* Kingdom was promiſed to us: And if we could promiſe this out of *Devotion* to a military Service, what then is to be done when Chriſt promiſes ſo much to them that engage with him? Let us willingly expoſe our Lives to this moſt precious Death; let us ſhew a maſculine Courage and an unviolated Faith. Methinks I ſee thoſe bleſſed Souls ſtanding before *Chriſt's* Tribunal, whom the *Emperor's* Officer juſt now baniſhed out of their Bodies: That's the true Glory which will recompenſe the ſhortneſs of this Life with a bleſſed Eternity. Let us by the Meſſengers unanimouſly return this Anſwer to the Emperor: *We acknowledg*, Cæſar, *that we are your Soldiers, and took up Arms for Defence of the Empire; nor did we ever baſely betray our Truſt, or forſake our Station, or deſerved that the Brand either of Fear or Cowardice ſhould be ſet upon us; nor ſhould we ſtick now to obey your Commands, did not the Laws of Chriſtianity, wherein we have been inſtructed, forbid us to worſhip Devils, and to approach the polluted Altars of the Gods. We underſtand you are reſolved either to defile us with ſacrilegious Worſhip, or to terrify us with a Decimation: Spare any further Search concerning us; know we are all Chriſtians, our Bodies we yield ſubject to your Power, but our Souls we reſerve intire for Chriſt the Author, and the Saviour of them.*

This was no ſooner ſpoken, and univerſally agreed to by the *Legion*, but it was carried to the *Emperor*; who, exaſperated with ſuch a generous Reſolution, commanded a *ſecond Decimation*, which was immediately executed, and the reſt, as before, commanded to return to *Octodurus*. Hereupon *Exuperius* the *Enſign*, catching up his Colours, thus addreſſed himſelf to them: You ſee me (*moſt excellent fellow-Soldiers*)

Soldiers) holding these *Ensigns* of secular Warfare: Chap. 4.
but these are not the *Arms* that I call you to, these are not the Wars to which I excite your Courage and Valour; 'tis another kind of Fighting that we are to chuse; they are not these *Swords* that must make our way into the *Heavenly Kingdom*; we stand in need of an undaunted Mind, and invincible Defence, a maintaining the Faith which we have given to God, to the very last.——Let the dismal Executioner go and carry this Message to his bloody Master, and tell him thus: We are, O *Emperor*, *your Soldiers*, but withal, (which we freely confess) the *Servants of God*; to you we owe military *Service*, to him *Innocency*; from you we have received *Wages* for our Labours, from him we had our very *Lives* and *Beings*: We cannot herein *obey* the Emperor, so as to *deny* God, the Author of our Lives, yea, and of yours too, whether you will or no. Nor is it, Sir, any Despair (which is always stoutest in greatest Straits) that makes us thus resolute against you; we have (you see) *Arms*, and yet make no resistance, chusing rather to *die* than to *overcome*, and desirous rather to perish *innocent*, than to live rebellious and revengeful. If you have a mind to appoint us to any greater and severer Torments, we are ready for them. *Christians* we are, and therefore cannot persecute those that are so. You must needs acknowledg the unconquerable Courage of this *Legion*: we throw down our Arms; your Officer will find our right Hands naked, but our Breast armed with a true catholick Faith. Kill us, and trample on us, we undauntedly yield our Necks to the Executioner's Sword: These things are the more pleasant to us, while setting light by your sacrilegious Attempts, we hasten apace to the Heavenly Crown.

Maxi-

Part III. *Maximianus* being told this, and despairing now to break their Constancy, commands his whole Army to fall upon them, and cut them off; which they did accordingly, without any Difference of Age or Person, mangling their Bodies, and then taking the Spoils: the *Emperor* having so appointed, that whoever killed any of the *Legion*, should have the Spoils of him whom he killed. And thus they died with their Swords in their hands, when they might have preserved their Lives (especially in a place so advantageous) by force of Arms, or to be sure have sold them at the dearest rate. This Story I have been willing to set down the more at large, because so remarkable in all its Circumstances, and containing the most unparallel'd Instance of Christian Piety and Submission, (next to that of our blessed *Saviour*) that I think was ever known in the World.

Menol. Gr. ἐν ἡμερ. κς. Ἰα. *sub. lit.* λ.

This is the account of those *noble* Martyrs; only, to prevent Mistakes, we are to take notice, that there was another *Mauritius* Commander of a *Legion* in the *East* (mentioned in the *Greek Menologies*) who together with seventy of his Soldiers was condemned by, and suffered under this self-same Emperor *Maximianus*, for refusing to do sacrifice; their Martyrdom being recorded by *Simeon Metaphrastes*, but the account quite different both as to *Persons* and *Things* from that which is here related.

Apud. Sur. ad diem 18. *Jul. tom.* 4.

By what has been said, we may see the Injustice of that Charge which the *Heathens* sometimes laid upon the *Christians*, that they were *Disturbers* of the Peace, and *Enemies* to Civil Government; an Indictment so purely false, and without any Shadow of a real Pretence to cover it, that the *ingenious* Heathen in *Minutius Felix* (though raking up all the Calumnies he could find, and putting the deepest Dye upon every Charge which Wit and Eloquence could put upon it) yet had not the Face so much as

as once to mention it. But however, as groundless as it was, they were frequently charged with it. Sometimes they were accused of *Disloyalty* and Treason, either because they would not *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, or not sacrifice for his *Safety*, or not worship the *Emperors* as *Divi*, or Gods, or not celebrate their *Festivals* in the same way with others. For the first, their refusing to *swear* by the Emperor's *Genius*, we have heard before what *Tertullian* answers to it, That it was in effect to give *divine* Honour to *Devils*. To the second, their not *sacrificing* for the Emperor's *Safety*, he answers, That none *sacrificed* to so good purpose as they, for that they offered up Prayers to the True, Living and Eternal God, for the Safety of the *Emperor*; that God whom the *Emperors* themselves did above all others desire should be propitious and favourable to them, as from whom they knew they derived their Government. For the third, their refusing to own the *Emperors* for Gods, he tells them, They could not do it, partly because they would not lye in saying so, partly because they durst not by doing it *mock* and deride the *Emperor*; nay, that he himself would not be willing to be stiled *God*, if he remembred that he was a *Man*, it being Man's Interest to yield to God: that the Title of *Emperor* was great enough, and that he could not be called *God*, without being denied to be Emperor; that he was therefore *Great*, because *less* than Heaven; and that if he would needs be a *Deity*, he must first conquer *Heaven*, lead *God* in Triumph, set *Guards* in Heaven, and impose *Tribute* upon that Place. For the last, their not observing the solemn *Festivals* of the *Emperors*, for which they were accounted Enemies to the Publick, they pleaded, That their Religion and their Conscience could not comply with that *Vanity*, that *Luxury*, and *Debauchery*, and all

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Ap. c. 30. *p.* 27.

Ib. c. 33. *p.* 28. *Vide Theoph. Antioch. l.* 1 *p.* 76.

Ib. c. 9.

Ib. c 35. *p.* 28.

Part III. all manner of Exceſs and Wickedneſs that was committed at thoſe times; that the publick *Joy* was expreſſed by that which was a publick *Diſgrace*, and thoſe things accounted *honourable* upon the *ſolemn* Days of Emperors, which were *unfit* and uncomely to be done upon *any* Days; and that there was little Reaſon they ſhould be accuſed for not obſerving that, where *Looſeneſs* of Manners was accounted *Loyalty*, and the Occaſion of *Luxury* a part of *Religion*,

Otherwhiles they were accuſed of *Sedition*, and holding *unlawful Combinations*, which aroſe upon the account of their religious Aſſemblies, which their Enemies beheld as *Societies* erected contrary to the *Roman* Laws. That we may the better apprehend what theſe *Societies* were (in the number whereof they reckoned the *Chriſtian Meetings*) and how condemned by the *Roman* Laws, we are to know, That in the Infancy of the *Roman* Commonwealth, *Numa Pompilius*, to take away the Difference between the *Sabines* and the *Romans*, divided the People into *Colleges* and little Corporations, (anſwerable to which are our *City-Companys*) according to their ſeveral *Trades* and Occupations, Goldſmiths, Dyers, Potters, Curriers, *&c.* which together with the City, increaſed to a great Number; (*Panciroll* out of both *Codes* gives us account of thirty ſix) to theſe he aſſigned their ſeveral Halls, times of meeting, and ſacred Rites, and ſuch Immunities as were moſt proper for them. But beſides theſe appointed by Law, ſeveral *Colleges* in imitation of them were erected in the moſt parts of the *Empire*, partly for the more convenient Diſpatch of buſineſs, but principally for the Maintenance of mutual Love and Friendſhip. All theſe *Societies* had their ſolemn Meetings, and cuſtomary *Feaſts*, which in time degenerated into great Exceſs and Luxury; inſomuch

Put. in vi. Num. p.71.

Appnd. ad Notit. Imper. fol. 197.

insomuch that *Varro* in his time complained, that the Excess and Prodigality of their Suppers made Provisions dear; and much more reason had * *Tertullian* to complain of it in his time. Answerable to these *Colleges* amongst the *Romans*, were the ἑταιρεῖαι or *Societies* amongst the *Grecians*, who also had their stated and common Feasts; such were the ἀνδρεῖα amongst the *Grecians*, the συσσίτια at *Lacedæmon*, and so in other States of *Greece*. But these Meetings (those of them especially that were not settled either by the Decree of the *Senate*, or the Constitution of the Prince) partly by reason of their Number, and the great Confluence to them, partly by reason of their luxurious Feasting, began to be looked upon by the State with a jealous Eye, especially after that the *Common-wealth* was turned into a *Monarchy*; the Emperors beholding them as fit *Nurseries* to plant and breed up treasonable and rebellious *Designs*, and therefore frequently forbad them under very *severe* Penalties. Thus *Julius Cæsar*, who first laid the Foundation of the Empire, reduced these *Colleges* to the antient Standard, putting down all that were *supernumerary* and *illegal*; wherein he was also followed by his Successor *Augustus*: and the succeeding Emperors very often put out strict *Edicts* against them, prohibiting them as dangerous and unlawful Combinations.

Collegiorum cœnæ immutabiles intendunt annos tam. Var. apud Jac. Gothofr. in C.Th. l.16. tit. 10. l. 20.

* *Apol. c. 39. p. 32.*

Vide l. 47. ff. tit. 22. de colleg. & corporib. Sueton. in vit. Jul. Cæs. c. 42. p. 50. in Aug. c. 32. p. 155.

Under the Notions of these *Societies* it was, that the *Christian* Congregations came to be forbidden; several Persons confederated into a Combination, and constantly meeting at a common Feast, rendring them suspicious to their Enemies. Hence *Pliny* giving the Emperor an Account of the *Christians*, and especially of their assembling at their solemn Feasts of Love, tells him, That they had forborn ever since, according to his Commands, he had

Lib. 10. Ep. 7.

Part III. had published an *Edict* to forbid the *Hetæriæ* or *Societies*. And indeed the *Christian* Assemblies, whereat they usually had the *Lord's Supper*, and their *Love-feasts*, looking somewhat like those *illegal* Meetings, (especially as beheld with the Eye of an *Enemy*) it was the less wonder, if the Heathens accused them of hatching Treason, and the Magistrates proceeded against them as Contemners and Violators of the Law.

But to this the *Christians* answered, That their *Meetings* could not be accounted amongst the *unlawful Factions*, having nothing common with them; that indeed the Wisdom and Providence of the State had justly prohibited such Factions to prevent Seditions, which might thence easily over-run and disquiet all Councils, Courts, Pleadings, and all Meetings whatsoever. But no such thing could be suspected of the *Christian* Assemblies, who were frozen as to any *ambitious Designs* of Honour or Dignity, Strangers to nothing more than publick Affairs, and had renounced all Pretences to *external Pomps* and Pleasures: That if the *Christian* Assemblies were like others, there would be some reason to condemn them under the Notion of Factions; but to whose prejudice (say they) did we ever *meet* together? We are the same when *together*, that we are when *asunder*; the same *united*, as is every *single* Person, hurting no Man, grieving no Man; and therefore that when such honest, good, pious, and chaste Men meet together, it was rather to be called a *Council* than a *Faction*. To which *Origen* adds, That seeing in all their Meeting they sought nothing but Truth, they could not be said to conspire against the *Laws*; seeing they designed nothing but to get from under the Power and Tyranny of the *Devil*, who had procured those Laws only to establish his Empire faster in the World.

Tert. Apol. c. 38. p. 30.

Ib. c. 39. p. 32.

Cont. Cels. l. 1. p. 5.

For

For elsewhere he bids *Celsus*, or any of his Party, shew any thing that was *seditious* amongst the *Christians:* That their Religion arose not at first (as he falsly charged it) out of Sedition, might appear in that their *Legislator* had so severely forbidden Killing and Murder; and that the Christians would never have entertained such mild Laws, as gave their Enemies opportunities to kill them like Sheep delivered to the Slaughter, without making the least resistance. Thus *Arnobius* confidently challenges the *Heathens*, Whether they could reject *Christianity* upon the account of its raising Wars, Tumults, and Seditions in the World? No, those were things which they may find nearer home. You *defame* us (says *Tertullian*) with Treason against the *Emperor*, and yet never could any *Albinians*, *Nigrians*, or *Cassians* (Persons that had mutinied and rebelled against the Emperors) be found amongst the *Christians*; they are those that swear by the Emperor's *Genii*, that have offered Sacrifice for their Safety, that have often condemned Christians; these are the Men that are found Traitors to the *Emperors*. A Christian is no Man's Enemy, much less his *Prince's*; knowing him to be constituted by God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole *Roman* Empire may be safe, as long as the World lasts. We worship the *Emperor*, as much as is either *lawful* or *expedient*, as one that is next to God; we *sacrifice* for his Safety, but 'tis to his and our God; and so as he has commanded, *only* by Holy Prayer: for the great God needs no Blood or sweet Perfumes; these are the *Banquets* and Repast of *Devils*, which we do not only *reject*, but expel at every turn. But to say more concerning this, were to light a *Candle* to the *Sun*. * *Julian* the Emperor (though no good Friend to *Christians*, yet) thus far does them right, That if they see any

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Lib. 3. *p.* 115.

Adv. Gent. l. 2. *p.* 20.

Ad Scap. c. 2. *p.* 69.

* Πλὴν εἴ τις εἰς τὸν βασιλέα ἐπίδοιεν ἀπακτῆναι τὰς πύας, ἀὐπνα μέλα κολάζουσιν. *Julian. Fragm. Ep. oper. c.* 1. *p.* 528.

Part III. one *mutinying* againſt his *Prince*, they preſently *puniſh* him with great Severities.

And here we may with juſt reaſon reflect upon the Iniquity of the Church of *Rome*, which in this Inſtance of Religion has ſo abominably debauched the Purity and Simplicity of the *Chriſtian* Faith. For they not only exempt the *Clergy* (where they can) from the Authority and Judgment of the *ſecular* Powers, whereby horrible Enormities do ariſe; but generally teach, That a Prince once *excommunicate*, his Subjects are abſolved from all Fealty and Allegiance, and he may with Impunity be depoſed or made away. How ſhall ſuch a Prince be thundred againſt with Curſes and Deprivations; every bold and treacherous *Prieſt* be authorized to brand his Sacred Perſon with the odious Names of *Infidel*, *Heretick* and *Apoſtate*; and be *Apoſtolically* licenſed to ſlander and *belibel* him, and furniſhed with Commiſſions to free his Subjects from their Duty and Allegiance, and to *allure* them to take up Arms againſt him? And if theſe Courſes fail, and Men ſtill continue Loyal, they have Diſciples ready by *ſecret* or *ſudden* Arts to ſend him out of the World. And if any Man's Conſcience be ſo nice as to boggle at it, his Scruples ſhall be removed; at worſt, it ſhall paſs for a *venial* Crime, and the *Pope* perhaps (with the help of a Limitation, that it be done for the Intereſt of the *Catholick* Cauſe) by his *Omnipotence* ſhall create it Meritorious.

De Rom. Pont. l. 5. c. 7. Col. 891. Cardinal *Bellarmine* (whoſe Wit and Learning were imployed to uphold a tottering Cauſe) maintains it ſtiffly, and in expreſs Terms, That if a *King* be an *Heretick* or an *Infidel* (and we know what they mean by that, nay, he particularly names the *reformed* Princes of *England* amongſt his Inſtances) and ſeeks to draw his Dominions unto his Sect; it is not only *lawful*, but *neceſſary*, to deprive him of

of his Kingdom. And although he knew that the whole Course of Antiquity would fly in the face of so bold an *Assertion*, yet he goes on to assert, That the reason why the *Primitive Christians* did not attempt this upon *Nero*, *Diocleſian*, *Julian* the Apostate, and the like, was not out of *Conscience*, or that they boggled out of a sense of Duty, but because they wanted *Means* and Power to effect it. A bold piece of Falshood this, and how contrary to the plain and positive Laws of *Christ*, to the meek and *Primitive* Spirit of the Gospel! But by the *Cardinal's* leave, it could not be for want of Power; for if (as *Seneca* observes) he may be Master of any Man's Life that undervalues his own, it was then as easy for a *Christian* to have slain *Nero* or *Diocleſian*, as it was of later Times for *Gerard* to pistol the Prince of *Orange*, or *Ravillac* to stab the King of *France*. Nay, take one of his own Instances, *Julian* the *Apostate*, a Prince bad enough, and that left no Method unattempted to seduce his Subjects to *Paganism* and *Idolatry*; yet though the greatest part of his Army were Christians, they never so much as whispered a treasonable Design against him, using no other *Arms* (as we noted out of *Nazianzen*) but *Prayers* and *Tears*. Had St. *Paul* been of their mind, he would have told the Christian *Romans* quite another Story, and instead of bidding them be subject to *Nero*, *not only for Wrath*, *but for Conscience sake*, would have instructed them to take all opportunities to have murdered or deposed him. But I shall not reckon up the Villanies they have been guilty of this kind, nor pursue the odious and pernicious Consequences of their Doctrine and Practice. Thus much I could not but take notice of, being so immediately opposite to the whole Tenor of the Gospel, and so great a Scandal to Christianity. And I verily believe, That had the Primitive Christians been no

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Ep. 4. *p.* 9.

Part III. better *Subjects* than their *Emperors* were *Princes*; had they practiſed on them thoſe bloody Artifices which have been common amongſt thoſe that call themſelves the only *Catholicks*; that barbarous Dealing would have been a greater curb to the flouriſhing of the Goſpel, than all the *ten* Perſecutions. For how could an impartial *Heathen* ever have believed their Doctrine to have been of God, had their Actions been ſo contrary to all Principles of Natural Divinity? Sure I am, *Pagan Rome* was in this caſe more *Orthodox*; and their *Pontifices* far better *Doctors of Divinity*. Their *Lex Julia* (as *Ulpian*, their great Lawyer, tells us) allotted the ſame Penalty to *Sacrilege* and *Treaſon*; placing the one the very next ſtep to the other: thereby teaching us, That they looked upon Treaſon againſt the Prince, as an Affront next to that which was immediately done *againſt* the Majeſty of Heaven. And *Marcellus*, the great Stateſman in *Tacitus*, lays it down for a *Maxim*, That *Subjects may wiſh for good Princes, but ought to bear with any*. And ſhame it is, that any ſhould call themſelves *Chriſtians*, and yet be found worſe than they; their Principles and Practices more oppoſite to the known Laws of God and Nature, more deſtructive to the Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

Lib. 7. de Offic. proconſ. in l. 1. ff. ad leg Jul. maj.

Hiſt. l. 4. c. 8. p. 489.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of their Penance, and the Discipline of the Antient Church.

This, why last treated of. The Church as a Society founded by Christ, has its distinct Laws and Privileges. What the usual Offences that came under the Church's Discipline. All Immorality open or confessed. Lapsing into Idolatry, the great Sin of those Times. How many ways usually committed. The Traditores *who, and their Crime. What Penalties inflicted upon delinqueut Persons. Delivering over to Satan, what. This extraordinary coercive Power, why vested in the Church. The common and standing Penalty by Excommunication. This practised among the antient* Gauls. *An account of it out of* Cæsar. *In use among the* Jews. *Thence derived to the* Christians. *This Punishment how expressed by Church-Writers. Managed according to the nature of the Fault. The Rigor of it sometimes mitigated. Delinquent Clergymen degraded, and never admitted but to Lay-Communion. Instances of it. An account of the Rise of* Novatianism, *and the Severity of its Principles. Stiled* Cathari. *Condemned by the Synod at* Rome. *Offenders in what manner dealt with. The Proceedure of the Action described by* Tertullian. *Penitents how behaving themselves during their Suspension.*

The greateſt not ſpared. The Caſe of Philippus *and* Theodoſius. *This Severity why uſed. Penances called Satisfactions, and why. The uſe of the word* [Satisfaction] *in the antient Fathers. Penitents how abſolved. After what time. In the Power of Biſhops to extend or ſhorten theſe Penitentiary Humiliations. Four particular Caſes obſerved, wherein the time of Penance might be ſhortned. In what ſenſe Communion is denied by ſome antient Canons to Penitents at the hour of Death. This Diſcipline adminiſtred primarily by Biſhops. By his leave, Presbyters, and (in neceſſity) Deacons might abſolve. The publick Penitentiary when, and why inſtituted: when and why laid aſide. Penitents taken into Communion by Martyrs and Confeſſors. This Power abuſed to exceſs.* Cyprian's *Complaint of the exceſſive Numbers of Libels of Peace, granted by the Martyrs to the Lapſed without the knowledg of the Biſhop. The Form of theſe Pacifick Libels exemplified out of* Cyprian. *Other ſorts of Libels. The* Libellatici, *who.* Thurificati. *Several ſorts of* Libellatici. *The* Libellatici *properly ſo called. Their manner of Addreſs to the Heathen Magiſtrate, to procure their Exemption from Sacrificing. That they did not privately deny Chriſt, proved againſt* Baronius. *The Piety and Purity of the Primitive Church, matter of juſt Admiration.*

Having

Chap. 5.

HAving travelled through the several Stages of the Subject I had undertaken, I should here have ended my Journy, but that there is one thing yet remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular Head, being of a general relation to the whole; and that is, to consider what **Discipline** was used towards Offenders in the antient Church: only premising this, That the *Christian* Church being founded and established by *Christ* as a *Society* and *Corporation*, distinct from that of the *Commonwealth*, is by the very nature of its Constitution (besides what positive ground and warrant there may be for it in *Scripture*) invested with an inherent Power (besides what is borrowed from the *Civil* Magistrate) of censuring and punishing its Members that offend against the Laws of it, and this in order to the maintaining its Peace and Purity. For without such a fundamental Power as this, 'tis impossible that as a Society it should be able to subsist; the very nature of a Community necessarily implying such a Right inherent in it. Now for the better understanding what this Power was, and how exercised in the first Ages of the *Church*, we shall consider these four Things: What were the usual *Crimes* that came under the *Discipline* of the antient Church; what *Penalties* were inflicted upon delinquent Persons; in what *manner* Offenders were dealt with; and by *whom* this Discipline was administred.

First, What the usual *Crimes* and *Offences* were, which came under the Discipline of the antient Church. In the general, they were any Offences against the *Christian* Law, any Vice or *Immorality* that was either *publick* in it self, or made knowr, and made good to the Church. For the Holy and Good Christians of those Times were *infinitely* careful to keep the Honour of their Religion unspotted, to stifle every Sin in its birth; and by bringing *Offen-*

Part III. *ders* to publick Shame and Penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant Influence of a bad Example. For this reason they watched over one another, told them *privately* of their *Faults* and Failures, and (when that would not do) brought them before the *Cognizance* of the Church. 'Tis needless to reckon up particular Crimes, when none were spared: Only because in those Days (by reason of the violent Heats of Persecution) the great *Temptation* which the weaker and more unsettled Christians were exposed to, was to deny their Profession, and to offer *Sacrifice* to the Heathen Gods; therefore lapsing into *Idolatry*, was the most common Sin that came before them: and of this they had very frequent Instances, it being that which for some Ages mainly exercised the Discipline of the Church. This Sin of Idolatry, or denying *Christ*, in those times was usually committed these three ways: Sometimes by exposing the *Scriptures* to the Rage and Malice of their Enemies, which was accounted a virtual Renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under the *Diocletian* Persecution in the *African* Churches. For *Diocletian* had put forth an *Edict*, That *Christians* should deliver up their *Scriptures* and the Writings of the Church to be burnt. This Command was prosecuted with great Rigour and Fierceness, and many Christians to avoid the Storm delivered up their Bibles to the Scorn and Fury of their Enemies. Hence they were stiled *Traditores* (of whom there is frequent *mention* in *Optatus* and St. *Augustine)* with whom the *Orthodox* refusing to join after the Persecution was over, the difference broke out into Schism and Faction, and gave birth to that unhappy Sect of *Donatists*, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles, Christians became guilty of Idolatry by *actual* sacrificing or worshipping Idols; these were called *Thurificati*, from

from their burning *Incenſe* upon the Altars of the Heathen Deities, and were the groſſeſt and vileſt ſort of *Idolaters*. Others again fell into this Sin, by baſely corrupting the Heathen Magiſtrate, and purchaſing a *Warrant* of ſecurity from him, to exempt them from the Penalty of the Law, and the neceſſity of ſacrificing and denying *Chriſt*; theſe were called *Libellatici*, of whom we ſhall ſpeak more afterwards. Chap. 5.

Secondly, What *Penalties* and Puniſhments were inflicted upon delinquent Perſons: and they could be no other than ſuch as were agreeable to the Nature and Conſtitution of the Church; which as it tranſacts only in *ſpiritual* Matters, ſo it could inflict no other than *ſpiritual* Cenſures and Chaſtiſements. 'Tis true indeed, That in the firſt Age eſpecially, the *Apoſtles* had a Power to inflict *bodily* Puniſhments upon Offenders, which they ſometimes made uſe of upon great Occaſions; as St. *Peter* did towards *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, ſtriking them dead upon the place, for their notorious Couzenage and groſs Hypocriſy. And St. *Paul* puniſhed *Elymas* with Blindneſs, for his perverſe and malicious oppoſition of the Goſpel: and this doubtleſs he primarily intends by his *delivering over Perſons unto Satan*; for no ſooner were they excommunicated and cut off from the Body of the Faithful, but *Satan*, as the common *Serjeant* and Jaylor ſeized upon them, and either by actual poſſeſſing, or ſome other Sign upon their Bodies, made appear that they were delivered over into his power. This could not but ſtrike a mighty terror into Men, and make them ſtand in awe of the *Cenſures* of the Church: and queſtionleſs the main Deſign of the Divine Providence in affording this *extraordinary* Gift, was to ſupply the Defect of civil and coercive Power, of which the Church was then wholly deſtitute, and therefore needed ſome more than *ordinary* Aſſiſtance, eſpecially at its firſt Conſtitution; ſome viſible

Part III. sible and *sensible* Punishments, to keep its Sentence and *Determinations* from being slighted by bold and contumacious Offenders. How long this miraculous Power lasted in the *Church*, I know not; or whether at all beyond the Apostles Age. The common and standing *Penalty* they made use of, was *Excommunication* or Suspension from Communion with the Church; the *cutting* off and casting out an offending Person as a *rotten* and infected Member, till by Repentance and wholsome Discipline he was *cured* and restored; and then he was re-admitted into Church-society, and to a Participation of the Ordinances and Privileges of Christianity.

This way of punishing by Excommunication, was not originally instituted by our *Lord*, or his Apostles, but had been antiently practised both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 'Twas commonly practised by the *Druides* (as *Cæsar*, who lived amongst them, informs us) who when any of the People became irregular and disorderly, presently *suspended* them from their Sacrifices. And the Persons thus suspended, were accounted in the number of the most *impious* and *execrable* Persons. All Men stood off from them, *shunned* their Company and Converse as an *Infection* and a Plague; they had no Benefit of *Law*, nor any *Honour* or Respect shewn unto them: and of all *Punishments*, this they accounted most *extreme* and severe. So far he, giving an account of this Discipline amongst the antient *Gauls*. In the *Jewish Church* nothing was more *familiar*; their three famous degrees of *Excommunication*, נדוי *Niddui*, חרם *Cherem*, שמתא *Shammatha*, are so commonly known, that 'twere impertinent to insist upon them. From the Usage of the *Jewish*, it was, amongst other Rites, adopted into the *Christian* Church, practised by the *Apostles*, and the Churches founded by them (whereof we have

De Bell. Gall. l. 6. p. 135.

Instances

Instances in the *New Testament*) but brought to greater *Perfection* in succeeding times. 'Twas *variously* expressed by the antient Writers, though much to the same purpose. Such Persons are said *abstineri*, to be kept back, a Word much used by *Cyprian* and the *Synod* of *Illiberis*; ἀφορίζεσθαι, to be *separated*, or to be separated from the Body of *Christ*, as St. *Augustine* oft expresses it; ἐκκόπτεσθαι τῆς κοινωνίας παντάπασιν, to be *wholly cut off* from Communion, as 'tis in the *Apostolick* Canons. Sometimes ῥίπτεσθαι ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, as the *Laodicean* Synod calls it, to be *thrown* out of the Church, to be *anathematized*, and without the Communion and Pale of the Church, as the Fathers of the Council of *Gangra* have it. Chap. 5.

Can. 28.

Epist. ad Armen. Episc. præfix. Conc. Gangr.

This Suspension, and the Penance that accompanied it, was greater or less, longer or shorter, according to the nature of the Crime; sometimes two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty *Years*, and sometimes for the whole Life; nay, in some cases it was not taken off at Death, but Persons were left to the Judgment of God, without any *Testimony* of their Reconciliation to the Church. Though herein the Severity was mitigated, not only by private Bishops, but by the great Council of *Nice*; which ordained, That penitent Persons should not be denied the Communion at the Hour of Death. Of all which Cases, or the most material of them, we have in the foregoing Discourse produced particular Instances in their proper Places. If the Person offending happened to be in *Orders*, he forfeited his Ministery; and though upon his Repentance he was restored to Communion, yet it was only as a *Lay-person*, never recovering the Honour and Dignity of his Office. Thus *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* giving *Fabius* of *Antioch* an account of the *Clancular* and *Schismatical* Ordination of *Novatian*, tells

Apud. Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. *c.* 43. *p.* 243.

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Apud. Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. *c.* 43. *p.* 243.

Part III. tells him, That one of the Bishops that *ordained* him returned after to the Church, with Tears bewailing his Offence; whom, at the Instance of the People, he received into *Lay-Communion*. The same *Epist.* 52. *p.* 69. *Cyprian* writing about this very Case, relates of *Trophimus* (who was either the very Bishop mentioned by *Cornelius*, or one of his Collegues) that returning to the Church with great Demonstrations of Repentance he was re-admitted, but no otherwise than in the Capacity of a Lay-man. And speaking elsewhere of *Basilides*'s Repentance, he tells us, He had no thoughts of retaining his *Bishoprick*; making account he was very well dealt with, if upon his Repentance he might but communicate as a *Laick*, and be received amongst the Number of the *Faithful*. This, St. *Basil* tells us, was an antient *Canon* and Practice of the Church, and accordingly ordains, That a *Deacon* guilty of Fornication should be deposed from his Office; and being thrust down into the Rank of the Laity, should in that quality be admitted to Communion.

Epist. 68. *p.* 114.

Epist. Can. ad Amphil. Can. 3. *p.* 22. *Vide. Zonar. & Balsam. in Can.* 10. *Conc. Nic.*

Indeed they strove by all ways imaginable to *discourage* Sin, never thinking the Curb strong enough, so they might but keep Persons within the bounds of Order and Regularity; insomuch, that by some the String was stretched too far, and all Pardon denied to them that had sinned. This uncomfortable Doctrine was, if not first *coined*, yet mainly *vended* by the *Novatian* Party. For *Novatus*, St. *Cyprian*'s Presbyter, being suspended by him for his vile Enormities, fled over to *Rome*, and there joined himself to *Novatian*, a Presbyter of that Church (these two Names are frequently confounded by the *Greek* Writers) who ambitiously sought to make himself Bishop, and to thrust out *Cornelius* newly elected into that See; but not being able to compass his design, between them they started this

amongst

amongst other *heretical* Opinions, That the lapsed (who through fear of Suffering had fallen in the time of Persecution) were not to be admitted to Repentance; and that though they should ever so oft confess their Sins, and ever so sincerely forsake them, yet there was no hope of Salvation for them: at least-wise (for so I incline to understand them) that it was not in the power of the Church to absolve or give them any hopes of Pardon, leaving them to the Judgment of God; stiling themselves (and not only, as *Balsamon* affirms, *ironically* stiled by others) by the Name of *Cathari*, the *pure* and undefiled Party. But they were herein presently condemned by a *Synod* of sixty Bishops, and more than as many Presbyters and Deacons gathered at *Rome* (and the Decree consented to and published by the rest of the Bishops in their several *Provinces*) concluding, That *Novatus* and his Party, and all that had subscribed to his most *inhuman* and mercileſs Opinion, should be cast out of the Church; and that the Brethren, who in that sad Calamity had fallen from their Profession, should be healed and restored by the Arts and Methods of Repentance. Which brings us to consider,

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Euſ. ubi ſupr. p. 242. *Epiph. Hær.* 59. *contra Catharos, p.* 214.

In Can. 8. *Conc. Nic.*

Thirdly, How and in what *manner* Offenders were dealt with, both as to their *Suspension* and *Penance*, and as to their *Absolution*. This Affair was usually managed after this order: At their publick Assemblies (as we find in *Tertullian*) amongst other Parts of their holy Exercises, there were Exhortations, Reproofs, and a *divine Censure*; for the Judgment is given with great Weight, as amongst those that are sure that God beholds what they do: and this is one of the highest *Præludiums* and Forerunners of the *Judgment* to come, when the delinquent Person is banished from the *Communion* of *Prayers*, *Assemblies*, and all holy *Commerce*. By this Passage we

Ap. c. 39. *p.* 31.

Part III. we clearly see, that the first thing in this solemn Action, was to make *Reproofs* and *Exhortations*, thereby to bring the Offender to the Sight and Acknowledgment of his Faults; then the *Sentence* or *Censure* was passed upon him, whereby he was suspended not only from the Communion of the Holy *Eucharist*, but from all holy Commerce in any (especially *publick*) Duty of Religion. We cannot imagine, That in every Person that stood under this Capacity, a formal Sentence was always denounced against him; it being many times sufficient, that the Fact he had done was evident and *notorious*, as in the case of the *lapsed* that had offered Sacrifice; for in this case the Offender was looked upon as *ipso facto* excommunicate, and all religious *Commerce* forborn towards him. 'Tis true, that in some Cases the *Martyrs* (as we shall see more anon) finding such lapsed Persons truly penitent, did receive them into *private* Communion: so did those Martyrs *Dionysius Alexandrinus* speaks of, in his Letter to *Fabius* Bishop of *Antioch*; they took the Penitents that had fallen into Idolatry into their Company, and communicated with them both at *Prayers* and *Meals*; but to *publick* Communion they were never admitted, till they had exactly fulfilled the Discipline of the Church, which principally consisted in many severe Acts of Repentance and Mortification, more or less according to the nature of the Offence.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 42. p. 241.

Tert. de pœnitent. c. 9. p. 127. Vide Euſ. l. 5. c. 28. p. 197.

During this space of *Penance*, they appeared in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a sordid and squalid Habit, with a sad Countenance, and a Head hung down, with *Tears* in their Eyes, standing without at the *Church-doors*, (for they were not suffered to enter in) falling down upon their knees to the Ministers as they went in, and begging the Prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all the Expressions and Demonstrations of

of a ſorrowful and dejected Mind, reckoning the *lower* they lay in Repentance, the higher it would exalt them; the more ſordid they appeared, the more they ſhould be cleanſed and purified; the leſs they ſpared themſelves, the more God would ſpare them. At theſe times alſo they made open *Confeſſion* of their Faults, this being accounted the very ſpring of Repentance, and without which they concluded it could not be real: *Out of Confeſſion* (ſays *Tertullian*) *is born Repentance, and by Repentance God is pacified.* And therefore without this, neither Riches nor Honour would procure any Admiſſion into the Church. Thus *Euſebius* reports, That when *Philippus* the Emperor would have gone in with the reſt of the *Chriſtians* upon *Eaſter-Eve*, to have partaked of the Prayers of the Church; the Biſhop of the Place would by no means ſuffer it, unleſs he firſt made *confeſſion* of his Sins, and paſſed through the order of the *Penitents*, being guilty of very great and enormous Sins; which 'tis ſaid he very willingly ſubmitted to, teſtifying by his Actions his real and religious Fear of the Divine Majeſty. This Story, though, as to the main of it, it might be true, yet as faſtened upon *Philip* the Emperor, I have formerly ſhewed it to be falſe; and that it's rather meant of one *Philippus*, who was Governour in *Egypt*, and profeſſed himſelf a *Chriſtian*: but however this was, 'tis certain that a Perſon as great as he, *Theodoſius the Great*, for his bloody and barbarous ſlaughter of the *Theſſalonians*, was by St. *Ambroſe* Biſhop of *Milan* ſuſpended, brought to publick *Confeſſion*, and forced to undergo a ſevere Courſe of Penance for eight Months together; when after great Demonſtrations of a hearty Sorrow and ſincere Repentance, not more rigidly impoſed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his uſual Proſtrations in the Church, (as if unworthy

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Ibid.

Ib. l. 6. c. 34. p. 232.

Part III. worthy either to ſtand or kneel) crying out in the words of *David*, *My Soul cleaveth unto the Duſt, quicken thou me according to thy word*; after having oft torn his Hair, beat his Forehead, watered his Cheeks with Tears, and humbly begged Peace and Pardon, he was abſolved, and reſtored to Communion with the Church: of which Paſſage, they who would know more, may find the Story largely related by *Theodoret*.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. *c.* 15.

This Severity was uſed towards Offenders, partly to make them more ſenſible of their Sins, partly to affright and deter others; but principally to give *Satisfaction* both to God and his Church, concerning the Reality and Sincerity of their Repentance. Hence it is that theſe *Penances*, in the Writings of thoſe times, are ſo often called *Satisfactions*: for whenever thoſe Fathers uſe the Word, 'tis either with reſpect to *Men* or *God*; if to *Men*, then the meaning is, That by theſe external Acts of Sorrow and Mortification they *ſatisfy* the Church of their Repentance, and make reparation for thoſe Offences and Scandals which they had given by their Sins: if to *God*, then 'tis taken for the *Acknowledgment* of a *Man's* Fault, and the begging of Pardon and Remiſſion. Thus *Cyprian*, ſpeaking of the State of impenitent Sinners, aggravates it by this, that they do *peccare, nec ſatisfacere*; ſin, but make no Satisfaction; *i. e.* (as in the very next Words he explains it) they do not *peccata deflere*, confeſs and bewail their Sins. And before, diſcourſing about God's being the only Object of Tears and Sorrow for Sin, which is to be addreſſed to God and not Man; he tells us, 'tis God that is to be appeaſed by Satisfaction, that he being greatly offended, is to be intreated by a long and full Repentance, as being alone able to pardon thoſe Sins that are committed againſt him. So that the Satisfaction which they reckoned they made

Aug. Enchirid. c. 65. *tom.* 3.

Ib. p. 173.

to God, consisted in seeking to avert his Displeasure, and to regain his forfeited Favour by a deep Contrition and Sorrow for Sin, by a real acknowledgment and *forsaking* of their Faults, and by an humble giving to God the Glory both of his Mercy and his Justice. Thence Confession is called by *Tertullian* the *Counsel* or Intendment of Satisfaction. And a little after he describes it thus: *Confession* (says he) *is that whereby we acknowledg our Offence to God, not as if he were ignorant of it, but in as much as by Confession Satisfaction is forwarded, by Confession Repentance is produced, and by Repentance God is appeased.* The same both he, *Cyprian*, and others frequently use in the same Sense; which I note the rather, because of that *absurd* and *impious Doctrine*, so current amongst the Papists, and which they pretend to derive from these very Fathers, That by Works of Penance, *Compensation* is made to God for the Debt of Punishment that was contracted; whereby, at least, the temporal Penalties due to Sin are *meritoriously* expiated and done away. But this, besides that it is flatly repugnant to the Doctrine of *Antiquity*, how much 'tis derogatory to the *Honour* of Divine Grace, and the *infinite* Satisfaction of the *Son* of God, I shall not now stand to dispute. To return therefore: This term of Penance was usually exacted with great Rigour, and seldom dispensed with, no Indulgence or Admission being granted till the full time was compleated. Therefore *Cyprian* smartly chides with some *Presbyters*, who had taken upon them to absolve the Lapsed before their time: and that whereas in lesser Offences Men were obliged to the just time of Penance, and to observe the Order of Discipline; they in a Crime of so heinous a nature, had hand over head admitted them to Communion, before they had gone through their Penance and Confession, and fulfilled the regular Customs and Orders of the Church.

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Tert. pœnitent. c. 18. p. 126, 127.

Ep. 9. p. 21.

Part III. The time of Penance being ended, they addreſſed themſelves to the Governors of the Church for *Abſolution*; hereupon their Repentance was taken into Examination, and being found to be ſincere and real, they were openly re-admitted into the Church, by the Impoſition of the Hands of the Clergy: the Party to be abſolved kneeling down between the Knees of the *Biſhop*, or, in his Abſence, of the *Preſbyter*, who laying his Hand upon his Head ſolemnly bleſſed and abſolved him. Whence doubtleſs ſprang that abſurd and ſenſleſs Calumny which the *Heathens* laid upon the *Chriſtians*, That they were wont *Sacerdotis colere genitalia*; ſo forward were they to catch at any Reproach which the moſt crooked and malicious Invention could inſinuate and ſuggeſt. The Penitent being abſolved, was received with the univerſal Joy and Acclamation of the People, as one returned from the State of the *Dead* (for ſuch, 'tis plain, they accounted them while under a State of Guilt, eſpecially the Lapſed; as *Cyprian* poſitively affirms them to be) being embraced by his Brethren, who bleſſed God for his Return, and many times wept for the Joy of his Recovery; who upon his Abſolution was now reſtored to a Participation of the *Lord's-Supper*, and to all other Acts of Church-Communion, which by his Crimes he had forfeited, and from which he had been ſuſpended, till he had given ſatisfactory Evidence of his Repentance, and Purpoſe to perſevere under the exact Diſcipline of Chriſtianity. This was the ordinary way wherein they treated *Criminals* in the Primitive Church; but in caſes of neceſſity (ſuch as that of Danger of Death) they did not rigidly exact the ſet time of Penance, but abſolved the Perſon, that ſo he might die in the Peace and Communion of the Church. The Story of *Serapion* at *Alexandria* we have formerly mentioned,

Cypr. ep. 11. p. 24.

Id. Epiſt. 27. p. 39. Vid. Epiſt. 46. p. 60.

Euſ. Hiſt. Eccl. 6. c. 44. p. 246.

who

who being ſuddenly ſurprized with Death while he was under the State of Penance, and not being able to die till he had received Abſolution; ſent for the Presbyter to teſtify his Repentance and abſolve him: but he being alſo at that time ſick, ſent him a part of the *conſecrated* Elements, which he had by him; upon the receiving whereof, he breathed out his Soul with great Comfort and Satisfaction, that he now died in Communion with the Church. Chap. 5.

The truth is, the time of theſe *Penitentiary* Humiliations often varied according to the Circumſtances of the caſe; it being much in the power of the Biſhops and Governors of the Church to ſhorten the time, and ſooner to abſolve and take them into Communion; the *medicinal* Virtue of Repentance, lying not in the duration, but the *manner* of it, as St. *Baſil* ſpeaks in this very caſe. A Learned Man has obſerved to my hand, four particular *Caſes* wherein they were wont to anticipate the uſual time of *Abſolution:* The firſt was, (what I obſerved but now) when Perſons were in danger of Death; this was agreed to by *Cyprian* and the Martyrs, and the *Roman* Clergy, and the Letters (as he tells us) ſent through the whole World to all the Churches. This alſo was provided for by the great Council of *Nice*, That as for thoſe that were at the *point* of Death, the *antient* and *canonical* Rule ſhould be obſerved ſtill, That when any were at the *point* of Death, they ſhould by no means be deprived of the laſt and neceſſary *Viaticum*, *i. e.* the Holy Sacrament, which was their great *Symbol* of Communion. And here, for the better underſtanding ſome Paſſages, it may not be unuſeful once for all to add this Note; That whereas many of the antient *Canons* (of the *Illiberine* Council eſpecially) poſitively deny Communion to ſome ſorts of Penitents even at the

Can. 2. *ad Amphil.*

Forbeſ. inſtruct. Hiſt. Th. l. 12. *c.* 7. *p.* 674.

Ep. 52. *ad Antonian. p.* 67.

Can. 13.

Part III. hour of Death, they are not to be understood, as if the Church mercilesly denied all *Indulgence* and *Absolution* to any Penitent at such a time; but only that it was thought fit to deny them the use of the *Eucharist*, which was the great *Pledg* and Testimony of their *Communion* with the Church.

The second Case was in time of *eminent* Persecution, conceiving it but fit at such times to dispense with the Rigour of the Discipline, that so *Penitents* being received to the *Grace* of Christ, and to the Communion of the Church, might be the better armed and enabled *to contend earnestly for the Faith.* This was resolved and agreed upon by *Cyprian* and a whole Council of *African* Bishops, whereof they give an *account* to *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*; That in regard *Persecution* was drawing on, they held it convenient and necessary, that Communion and *Reconciliation* should be granted to the *Lapsed*, not only to those that were a *dying*, but even to the *living*; that they might not be left naked and unarmed in the time of Battel, but be able to defend themselves with the Shield of *Christ's* Body and Blood. For how (say they) shall we teach and persuade them to shed their Blood in the *Cause* of *Christ*, if we deny them the Benefit of his Blood? How shall we make them fit to drink the *Cup* of Martyrdom, unless we first admit them in the Church to a right of Communication, to drink of the *Cup* of the Blood of Christ? A third Case wherein they relaxed the Severity of this *Discipline*, was, when great *Multitudes* were concerned, or such *Persons* as were likely to draw great Numbers after them: in this case they thought it *prudent* and reasonable to deal with Persons by somewhat milder and gentler Methods, lest by holding them to terms of Rigour and Austerity, they should provoke them to fly off either to *Heathens* or to *Hereticks*. This Course

Ep. 54. p. 76.

Cyprian

Cyprian tells us he took; he complied with the ne- Chap. 5.
ceſſity of the times, and like a wiſe Phyſician yielded
a little to the Humour of the Patient, to provide *Ep.* 52. ad *init.*
for his Health, and to cure his Wounds; and quotes
herein the Example of *Cornelius* of *Rome*, who dealt
juſt ſo with *Trophimus* and his Party: and elſe-
where, That out of an earneſt Deſire to regain and *Ep.* 55.
reſettle the Brethren, he was ready to connive at *p.* 85.
many things, and to forgive any thing, and did
not examine and exact the greateſt Crimes with
that full Power and Severity that he might; inſo-
much that he thought he did almoſt *offend* himſelf
in an over-liberal remitting other Mens *Offences*.
Laſtly, in abſolving Penitents, and mitigating the
Rigours of their Repentance, they uſed to have re-
ſpect to the *Perſon* of the Penitent, to his *Dignity*, or
Age, or *Infirmity*, or the *Courſe* of his paſt Life;
ſometimes to the Greatneſs of his *Humility*, and the
Impreſſion which his preſent Condition made upon
him. Thus the *Ancyran* Council impowers Biſhops *Can.* 5. *Vid.*
to examine the manner of Mens Converſion and *Conc. Nic.*
Repentance, and accordingly either to moderate or *Can.* 12.
enlarge their time of Penance; but eſpecially that
regard be had to their Converſation both before and
ſince their *Offence*, that ſo Clemency and *Indulgence*
may be extended to them. So for the caſe of Perſons
of more than ordinary *Rank* and *Dignity*, or of a
more tender and delicate *Conſtitution*, *Chryſoſtom* de- *De ſacer-*
termines, That in chaſtiſing and puniſhing their Of- *dot. l.* 2. *c.* 4.
fences, they be dealt withal in a more peculiar man- *p.* 18. *tom.* 4.
ner than other Men; leſt by holding them under
over-rigorous Penalties, they ſhould be tempted
to fly out in Deſpair, and ſo throwing off the
Reins of Modeſty, and the Care of their own Hap-
pineſs and Salvation, ſhould run headlong into all
manner of Vice and Wickedneſs. So wiſely did
the Prudence and Piety of thoſe times deal with

Part III. Offenders; neither letting the Reins so loose as to patronize *Presumption*, or encourage any Man to sin, nor yet holding them so strait as to drive Men into *Despair*.

The fourth and last *Circumstance* concerns the *Persons* by whom this *Discipline* was administred. Now though 'tis true, that this Affair was managed in the *publick* Congregation, and seldom or never done without the *Consent* and Approbation of the People (as *Cyprian* more than once and again expressly tells us) yet was it ever accounted a *ministerial* Act, and properly belonged to them. *Tertullian*, speaking of Church-Censures, adds, That the *Elders* that are approved, and have attained that Honour, not by Purchase but Testimony, *preside* therein. And *Firmilian* Bishop of *Cæsarea Cappadocia*, in a Letter to St. *Cyprian*, speaking of the *Majores natu*, the *Seniors* that preside in the Church, tells us, That to them belongs the Power of *Baptizing*, *Imposing Hands*, (*viz.* in Penance) and *Ordination*. By the Bishop it was primarily and usually administred; the *determining* the time and manner of Repentance, and the conferring Pardon upon the penitent Sinner, being Acts of the *highest* Power and Jurisdiction, and therefore reckoned to appertain to the *highest* Order in the Church. Therefore 'tis provided by the *Illiberine* Council, That Penance shall be prescribed by none but the *Bishop*; only in case of necessity, such as Sickness and Danger of Death, by leave and command from the Bishop, the *Presbyter* or *Deacon* might impose *Penance* and absolve. Accordingly we find *Cyprian*, amongst other Directions to his Clergy how to carry themselves towards the Lapsed, giving them this; That if any were overtaken with Sickness or present Danger, they should not stay for his coming, but the sick Person should make Confession of his Sins to the next *Presbyter*,

Apol. c. 39.

Inter epist. Cyp. 146.

Can. 32. *p.* 40.

Epist. 12. *p.* 4. *Vid.*

byter, or if a Presbyter could not be met with, to a *Deacon*; that so laying Hands upon him, he might depart in the *Peace* of the Church. Chap. 5.

But though while the Number of *Christians* was small, and the Bounds of particular *Churches* little, Bishops were able to manage these and other parts of their Office in their own Persons, yet soon after the task began to grow too great for them; and therefore about the time of the *Decian* Persecution, when Christians were very much multiplied, and the number of the Lapsed great, it seemed good to the Prudence of the Church, partly for the ease of the Bishop, and partly to provide for the Modesty of Persons, in being brought before the whole Church to confess every Crime; to appoint a *publick Penitentiary* (some Holy, Grave and Prudent *Presbyter*) whose Office it was to take the Confession of those Sins which Persons had committed after *Baptism*, and by Prayers, Fastings, and other Exercises of Mortification, to prepare them for Absolution. He was a kind of *Censor morum*, to inquire into the Lives of Christians, to take an account of their Failures, and to direct and dispose them to Repentance. This Office continued for some hundreds of Years, till it was *abrogated* by *Nectarius* (St. *Chrysostom*'s Predecessor in the *See* of *Constantinople*) upon the occasion of a notorious Scandal that arose about it. A Woman of good Rank and Quality had been with the *Penitentiary*, and confessed all her Sins committed since Baptism; he enjoined her to give up her self to Fasting and Prayer: but not long after she came to him and confessed, That while she was conversant in the Church to attend upon those Holy Exercises, she had been tempted to commit Folly and Leudness with a *Deacon* of the Church; whereupon the *Deacon* was immediately cast out: But the People being exceedingly troubled

Socr. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 19. p. 278. Confer. Zoz. l. 7. c. 16. p. 726.

Part III. at the Scandal, and the Holy Order hereby expoſed to the Scorn and Deriſion of the *Gentiles*, *Nectarius*, by the Advice of *Eudæmon* a Presbyter of that Church, wholly took away the Office of the publick *Penitentiary*; leaving every one to the Care and Liberty of his own Conſcience, to prepare himſelf for the Holy Sacrament. This account *Socrates* aſſures us he had from *Eudæmon*'s own Mouth. And *Sozomen* adds, That almoſt all Biſhops followed *Nectarius*'s Example, in abrogating this Office.

But beſides the ordinary and ſtanding Office of the Clergy, we find even ſome of the Laity, the *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*, that had a conſiderable hand in *abſolving* Penitents, and reſtoring them to the Communion of the Church. For the *underſtanding* of which, we are to know, That as the *Chriſtians* of thoſe times had a mighty Reverence for *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*, as the great Champions of Religion, ſo the *Martyrs* took upon them to diſpenſe in extraordinary Caſes; for it was very cuſtomary in times of Perſecution for thoſe, who through fear of ſuffering had lapſed into *Idolatry*, to make their Addreſs to the Martyrs in Priſon, and to beg peace of them, that they might be reſtored to the Church: who conſidering their *Petitions*, and weighing the *Circumſtances* of their Caſe, did frequently grant their Requeſts, mitigate their Penance, and by a *Note* ſignified under their Hands, ſignify what they had done to the Biſhop; who taking an account of their Condition, abſolved and admitted them to Communion. Of theſe *Libelli*, or Books granted by the *Martyrs* to the *Lapſed*, there is mention in *Cyprian* at every turn; who complains they were come to that exceſſive number, that *thouſands* were granted almoſt *every day*. This many of them took upon them to do with great Smartneſs and Authority, and without that Reſpect that was due to the Biſhops,

Ep. 10, 11, 12. *& alibi. Ep.* 14. *p.* 27.

Bishops, as appears from the *Note* written to *Cyprian* by *Lucian*, in the *name* of the *Confessors*; which because 'tis but short, and withal shews the Form and Manner of those *pacifick Libels*, it may not be amiss to set it down; and thus it runs: *All the Confessors to* Cyprian *the Bishop, greeting. Know that we have granted Peace to all those, of whom you have had an account what they have done, how they have behav'd themselves since the Commission of their Crimes, and we would that these Presents should be by you imparted to the rest of the Bishops. We wish you to maintain Peace with the holy Martyrs. Written by* Lucian *of the Clergy, the Exorcist and Reader being present.* This was look'd upon as very peremptory and magisterial; and therefore of this Confidence and Presumption, and Careleſnefs in promiscuously granting these *Letters of Peace*, *Cyprian* not without reason complains, in an Epistle to the Clergy of *Rome*. Chap. 5. *Ep.* 16. *Ep.* 22. *p.* 34.

Besides these Libels granted by the *Martyrs*, there were *other Libelli* granted by *Heathen Magistrates*, (of which it may not be impertinent to speak a little) whence the Lapsed that had them, were commonly called *Libellatici*, and they were of several sorts: Some writing their Names *in libellis*, in Books, and professing themselves to worship *Jupiter*, *Mars*, and the rest of the Heathen Gods, presented them to the Magistrate; and these did *really* sacrifice, and pollute not their *Souls* only, but their *Hands* and their *Lips*, with unlawful Sacrifice, as the Clergy of *Rome* expresses it in a Letter to St. *Cyprian*; these were called *Thurificati*, and *Sacrificati*, from their having offered Incense and Sacrifices. Somewhat of this nature was that *Libel* which *Pliny* speaks of in his Epistle to the Emperor *Trajan*, presented to him while he was *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*; containing a Catalogue of the Names of many, some whereof had been accused to be *Christians* and denyed it, others confess'd *Ep.* 31. *p.* 44. *Ad Antonian. ep.* 91. *p.* 66, 67. *Ep.* 97. *l.* 10.

Part III. fess'd they had been so some Years since, but had renounced it; all of them adoring the Images of the Gods and the Emperor's Statue, offering Sacrifice, and *blaspheming Christ:* and were accordingly dismissed and released by him. Others there were, who did not themselves sign or present any such *Libels*, but some Heathen Friends for them, (and sometimes out of kindness they were encouraged to it by the Magistrates themselves) and were hereupon released out of Prison, and had the favour not to be urged to sacrifice. Nay, *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* speaks of some Masters, who, to escape themselves, compelled their *Servants* to do sacrifice for them; to whom he appoints a three Years Penance for that sinful compliance and dissimulation. A third sort there was, who finding the edge and keenness of their *Judges* was to be taken off with a Sum of *Mony*, freely confess'd to them, That they were Christians and could not sacrifice, pray'd them to give them a *Libel* of Dismission, for which they would give them a suitable Reward. These were most properly call'd *Libellatici* and *Libellati*. *Cyprian* acquaints us with the manner of their Address to the Heathen Magistrate, bringing in such a Person thus speaking for himself: I had both *read* and *learnt* from the Sermons of the *Bishop*, That the Servant of God is not to *sacrifice* to Idols, nor to *worship* Images; wherefore that I might not do what was unlawful, having an opportunity of getting a *Libel* offered, (which yet I would not have accepted, had it not offered it self) I went to the Magistrate, or caused another to go in my Name, and tell him, That I was a *Christian*, and that it was not lawful for me to sacrifice, nor to approach the Altars of the Devils; that therefore I would give him a Reward to excuse me, that I might not be urged to what was unlawful. These, though not altogether so bad as the *Sacrificati*, yet

Ep. 31. *p.* 44.

Can. 7. *Synodic. tom.* 2. *part.* 1. *p.* 12.

yet *Cyprian* charges as guilty of *implicit* Idolatry, having defiled their Consciences with the purchase of these Books, and done that by *consent* which others had *actually* done. Chap. 5.

I know *Baronius* will needs have it (and he boasts that all that had written before him were mistaken in the Case) That these *Libellatici* were not exempted from denying Christ, nor gave Mony to that end; that they only requested of the Magistrate, That they might not be compelled to offer Sacrifice; that they were ready to deny *Christ*, and were willing to give him a Reward to dispense with them only so far, and to furnish them with a *Libel* of Security; and that they did really deny him before they obtained their *Libel*. But nothing can be more plain, both from this and several other Passages in *Cyprian*, than that they did not either *publickly* or *privately* sacrifice to Idols, or actually *deny* Christ; and therefore bribed the Magistrate that they might not be forced to do what was unlawful. And hence *Cyprian* argues them as guilty by their *Wills* and *Consent*, and that they had *implicitly* denied *Christ*: How? by *actually* doing it? No, but by *pretending* they had done what others were really guilty of. Certainly the *Cardinal's* Mistake arose from a not right understanding the several sorts of the *Libellatici*, the first whereof (as we have shewn) did *actually* sacrifice and deny *Christ*. *Annal. Ecc. ad. An. CCLIII. num. XX. & seq. tom. 2.*

And now having taken this View of the Severity of Discipline in the antient Church, nothing remains, but to *admire* and *imitate* their Piety and Integrity, their infinite Hatred of Sin, their Care and Zeal to keep up that Strictness and Purity of Manners, that had rendred their Religion so renowned and triumphant in the World. A Discipline, which how happy were it for the *Christian* World, were it again re-settled in its due Power and Vigour! which

Part III. which particularly is the *Judgment* and *Deſire* of our *own Church* concerning the Solemn *Quadrageſimal* Penances and Humiliations: *In the Primitive Church* (ſays the *Preface* to the Commination) *there was a godly Diſcipline, That at the beginning of Lent, ſuch Perſons as ſtood convicted of notorious Sin, were put to open Penance, and puniſhed in this World, that their Souls might be ſaved in the Day of the Lord; and that others, admoniſhed by their Example, might be the more afraid to offend. Which ſaid Diſcipline it is much to be wiſhed might be reſtored again.*

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

FINIS.

A CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX OF THE Authors Cited in this Book,

According to the Vulgar Computation. With an Account of the Edition of their Works.

Chriſtian or Eccleſiaſtical Writers.	*Flour. A. D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*	
Apoſtolorum Canones Conſtitutiones			Pariſ.	1618
Clemens Romanus	70	Epiſt. ad Cor.	Oxon.	1633
Dionyſius Areopagita		Opera	Antw.	1634
Ignatius Antiochenus	101	Epiſtolæ.	Amſt.	1646
		Append. Uſher.	Lond.	1647
Polycarpus	130	Epiſtol.	apud Euſeb.	
Abdias Babylonius		Hiſtor. Apoſtol.	Par.	1566
Juſtinus Martyr	155	Opera.	Par.	1636
Smyrnenſis Eccleſia	168	Epiſtol.	apud Euſeb.	
Melito Sardenſis	170	Orat. Apolog.	Par.	1636
Athenagoras	170	Legat. pro Chriſt.	apud Euſeb.	
DionyſiusCorinth.Epiſc.	172	Epiſtolæ.	Par.	1636
Theophilus Antioch.	180	Lib. 3 ad Autolyc.	Ibid.	
Tatianus	180	Orat. ad Græcos.	apud Euſeb.	
Hegeſippus	180	Commentar.	Par.	1639
Irenæus	184	adv. Hæreſes.	apud Euſeb.	
Polycrates Epheſ. Epiſc.	197	Epiſtol.	Par.	1664.
Tertullianus	198	Opera.	Par.	1641
Clemens Alexandrinus	204	Opera.	Par.	1668
Minutius Fœlix	230	Octavius.	Par.	1522
Origines	230	Opera Lat.	Cant.	1658
		contra Celſ.	Mogun.	1604.
Gregorius Neocæſar.	250	Opera.	Par.	1668
Cyprianus	250	Opera.	apud Cypr.	
Cornelius Papa	250	Epiſtol.	apud Cypr.	
Firmilianus	250	Epiſtol.	apud Cypr.	
Pontius Diaconus	258	Vit. Cypr.		

Chri-

Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers	*Flour. A.D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*
Dionysius Alexandrinus	260	Epistol.	apud Euseb.
Arnobius	297	adv. Gentes.	Par. 1668
Lactantius	300	Opera.	L. Bac. 1660
Commodianus	320	Instructiones.	Par. 1668
Constantinus M.	325	Orat. ad SS.	apud Euseb.
Eusebius Cæsarienſis	329	de Præp. Evang.	Par. 1628
		Histor. Eccl.	Par. 1659
		de locis Hebr.	Par. 1631
		Chronic.	Amst. 1658
Athanasius	350	Opera.	Heidel. 1601
Julius Firmicus	350	de Error. Prof. Rel.	Par. 1668
Optatus Milevitanus	365	de Schism. Donat.	Lond. 1633
Ephræm Syrus	370		
Ambrosius	370	Opera.	Basil. 1567
Basilius M.	370	Opera.	Par. 1637
Gregorius Nazianzenus	370	Opera.	Par. 1609
Gregorius Nyssenus	380	Opera.	Par. 1615
Epiphanius	390	Opera edit. Græc.	Basil. 1544
Palladius	390	Histor. Lausiac.	Par. 1555
Theophilus Alexandr.	390	Edit. de Theophan.	apud Balsam.
Jo. Chrysostomus	400	Opera.	Par. 1636
		in N. T.	Heidel. 1603
Hieronymus	400	Opera.	Basil. 1553
Asterius Amasenus	400	Homil.	apud Phot.
Prudentius	405	Hymni.	Amst. 1631
Augustinus	410	Opera.	Basil. 1569
Innocentius Papa	416	Epistolæ Decret.	Par. 1535
Paulinus Nolanus	420	Epist.	inter Orthod.
Paulinus Presbyter	420	Vit. Ambr.	apud Ambr.
Severus Sulpitius	420	Hist. Sacr.	L. Bat. 1635
Maximus Taurinenſis	420	Homil.	Ludg. 1633
Philostorgius	425	Hist. Eccl.	Genev. 1643
Orosius	425	adv. Paganos.	Col. 1561
Possidius	430	Vit. Augustin.	apud Aug.
Hisdorus Pelusiota	430	Epist.	Heidel. 1605
Jo. Cassianus	440	de Instit. Monarch.	Lugd. 1574
Socrates, Sozomenus	440	Hist. Eccl.	Par. 1668
Theodoretus	440	Hist. Eccl.	Genev. 1612
		Hist. Relig.	Par. 1555
		de Cur. Græc. Aff.	Heidel. 1592
Eucherius Lugdunenſis	440	Mars. Theb. Leg.	apud Sur.
Sidonius Apollinaris	486	Epist.	Hanov. 1617
Victor Uticenſis	490	de Persec. Vand.	Par. 1569
Jo. Malela	600	Chronic.	apud Usser.
Gregorius M.	600	Opera.	Par. 1640
Photius	858	Bibliothec.	Rothom. 1653
		Nomocan.	Par. 1615
Ado Viennenſis	870	Martyrolog.	apud Sur.
Suidas	880	Lexic.	Genev. 1618
Gregorius Presbyter	940	Vit. Naz.	apud Naz.
Simeon Metaphrastes	1030	Vitæ Sanctorum.	apud Sur.
Jo. Zonaras	1118	Schol. in Can.	Par. 1618
Const. Harmenopulus	1115	Epitom. Can.	ap. Jus. Gr. Ro.
Alexius Aristenus	1166	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.

Chri-

Chriſtian or Eccleſiaſtical Writers.	*Flour. A. D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*	
Theodoſius Balſamon	1191	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.	
Nicephorus Calliſtus	1310	Hiſt. Eccl.	Par.	1630
Matthæus Blaſtares	1335	Nomocan. Alphab.	Oxon.	1672
Joſephus Ægyptius	1390	Paraphraſ. Arab. Conciliorum	Oxon.	1672
Joſephus the Jew	70	Antiquit. Jud.	Genev.	1611

Heathens Writers.	*Flour. A. D.*	*Books.*	*Editions.*	
M. Varro, M. T. Cicero, Jul. Cæſar, C. Tacitus	ante Chr. Nat.			
C. Tacitus	98		Amſt.	1649
Plinius Secundus	100	Epiſtol.	L. Bat.	1653
Suetonius	110	Vitæ Cæſar.	L. Bat.	1651
Brutius, Chronograph.			apud Euſeb.	
Plutarchus	110	Opera	Par.	1624.
Celſus Epicureus	110	Serm. Verus.	apud Orig.	
Lucianus	110	Opera	Salm.	1618
Galenus	150	Oper. edit. Græc.	Ven.	1525
Arrianus	150	in Epictet.	Cant.	1655
M. Antoninus Imp.	161	de rebus ſuis.	Cant.	1652
Dion. Caſſius	224	Hiſt. Rom.	Hanov.	1606
Ulpianus J. C.	230	de Offic. Procon.	in Digeſt.	
Porphyrius	280	de Abſtinent.	Cant.	1655
Lampridius	290	Vit. Alex. Sev.	Hiſt. Auguſt.	
Vulcatius Gallicanus	290	Vit. Avid. Coſſ.	L. Bat.	1661
Julianus Imp.	361	Opera	Par.	1630
Eutropius	364	Hiſt. Rom.	int. Script. H. Aug.	1568
Eunapius	370	de Vit. Philoſoph.	Gen.	1616
Libanius	370	Orationes	Par.	1627
Ammianus Marcellinus	370	Hiſt. Rom.	inter. H. Aug. Script.	1568
Vegetius	370	de re Milit.	Weſel.	1670
Symmachus	380	Epiſtol.	Lugd.	1598
Zoſimus	410	Hiſtor. Nov.	ad calc. Herod.	
			Lugd.	1611
Macrobius	422	Saturnal.	L. Bat.	1628
Simplicius	530	Com. in Epict.	L. Bat.	1640

Councils

Councils	*Holden A. D.*
Concilium	
Africanum ſub Cypriano contra Novatum	250
Aliud ſub Cypriano de Hæret. Baptiz.	260
Aliud ſub Cypriano	263
Antiochenum contra Paul. Samoſ.	267
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